

# Australia and New Zealand

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The scope of *Historical Studies* is outlined in the foreword to the first number, April 1940; in brief, it will include work on Australian and New Zealand history undertaken by historians in all parts of the world, together with researches in other fields undertaken by teachers and students within the two dominions.

Contributions for the April issue should reach the editor before 15 February, and for the October issue before 15 August.

Wherever possible, articles should not exceed 7-9,000 words, and should be submitted in typescript. Contributors are also requested to follow as closely as possible the conventions introduced in numbers 3 and 4 of the first volume in the matter of footnote references and the use of capitals.

The editor would appreciate comments and suggestions.

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# HISTORICAL STUDIES

## Australia and New Zealand

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### THE TECHNIQUE OF A CONTEMPORARY WAR HISTORIAN

IT is not easy to remember the problems that faced us when we first settled into the rambling old homestead at Tuggranong—away in the wide Murrumbidgee valley with its enclosing mountains, twelve miles from Canberra—and having seen the shelving and map cupboards fitted, and the furniture from the old German prisoners of war camp at Molonglo, waited for two of the War Records staff, with their precious railway truckload of files and maps to arrive at the siding three miles away, travelling by what Queanbeyan folk called 'The Midnight Horror'—the mixed goods train from Goulburn. But it is easy, looking back, to pick out a few of the fundamental lessons learned, most of them several times over, in the solution of those problems.

The papers that went on to those shelves were case after case of the official records of the A.I.F., the first instalment comprising, roughly, those of the first year of the war, together with my own diaries and notes compiled during the war, and the files of *The Times* and many Australian newspapers—numbers of these last being stored in the old stone Tuggranong woolshed where, unfortunately, they suffered so badly in stormy weather that we had them re-packed and ultimately sent back to the War Memorial store, then in Melbourne. A full list of some forty classes of records on which our work was based is given in the *Proceedings* of the Royal Australian Historical Society, vol. xxiv, pt. ii (Feb., 1938). Nor does the present article explain our reasons for writing the history with the mass of detail that is one of its characteristics; these have been described in an article 'Our War History' in *The Bulletin* (Sydney), on 27 May 1942. We are concerned here with the technique of studying the data for all that detail, selecting and classifying it and bringing it on to the printed page.



*Australia's War Records*

But first, since it has not been fully discussed elsewhere and because it partly determined the technique, a word must be said as to the adequacy of our records. The records of military operations were ample, the official ones having been admirably kept and classified by the Australian War Records section of the A.I.F. under Captain (now Lieut.-Colonel) J. L. Treloar, formerly General White's confidential clerk, who in 1917 was appointed to create that section, which took over our records of earlier date from the British War Office. These official files comprised, by a careful estimate, some 21,500,000 foolscap sheets, which were, of course, not indexed or listed, but were very well classified by the War Records section, this work being largely carried out after the armistice, when Treloar had at one time 650 people, mainly soldiers awaiting repatriation, engaged upon it. After the war the section merged in the Australian War Memorial, whose small classifying staff managed to keep just ahead of my requirements as I wrote, though in 1939 I was practically level with it.

The basis of classification was units and dates, and the vast collection was bound into easily manageable files of ledger size, each file containing the records of a body of troops during a tour in the front line or in rear. Thus anyone anxious to find the records of, say, the 28th Infantry Battalion for the battle of the Beaurevoir Line, 3 October 1918, would find them classified together in the file of 7th Infantry Brigade for the period 2-5 October 1918. They would comprise its war diary, and all such orders, reports, messages, maps, and correspondence as had originated in that battalion in that period and had been preserved for (or since added to) the official record. The replies to any of these letters or messages would, if preserved, be found in the file of whatever staff or unit had written them. Thus the student could usually know beforehand where any particular document, if it existed in the official records, could be found. But there was no means of knowing whether it did exist; nor, without perusing any document, was there any means of knowing what information it contained. It often happened that, turning over quickly the sheets of some file, one came suddenly upon a note or message whose existence in the file had never been suspected, and which illuminated a whole field of known facts.

There were very great deficiencies in the official records of fighting until the middle of 1917, when Treloar got to work and stirred commanders and staffs to greater interest; but, fortunately, these gaps were amply covered by my own diaries and notes, which also provided most of the colour, though by no means all. These notes



and diaries, comprising some three hundred volumes, well indexed by A. W. Bazley, also contained the only record of many conferences and conversations, formal and informal, with Generals Haig, Monash and White, Mr. W. M. Hughes and others, which, if not noted at the time, would never have been recorded. In addition there were questionnaires kindly answered by the Turkish and German Staffs; at least two hundred German regimental and other histories, besides British and Australian ones; memoirs, English, German and French; statements by returned prisoners of war; narratives and explanations obtained by personal correspondence; and newspaper files. These, together with the British, German, Canadian, French and American sources, in which our representatives, Captain J. J. W. Herbertson, Mr. T. H. E. Heyes, and Mr. Voss, were courteously given the opportunity to make investigations, afforded ample data so far as the fighting was concerned.

When it came, however, to records kept in the Australian departments, the position was different. Both Sir Ernest Scott, in writing volume xi ('Australia during the War') and Colonel Graham Butler, the medical historian of the war, found that records of the utmost importance had been lost or destroyed; and they had to obtain their information from the best alternative sources they could find. Professor Scott's work was hampered chiefly by the destruction of the records of price fixing, but fortunately the reports made by the Interstate Commission (until it was killed by the High Court) gave him the key to important problems. Sir Ernest Scott's task, which had to be completed in the spare time left by his regular duties, involved reference to a number of sources which it was out of the question to study in detail. The advice of heads of departments and other wartime authorities helped him in his selection. He also realised that the communications of the Australian government with the British during most of the war went through the bottleneck of the Governor-General's office. Bottlenecks may not be favourable to efficiency, but they are very useful to probing historians, for a study of what passes through them may give a clue to a great part of the business of the state. It was by the study of this one that we came to realize the extent to which the wool, wheat, meat, manufacturing and other industrial problems of Australia were involved with the shipping problem—one of the outstanding features of Australia's war history.

For the Versailles peace conference Professor Scott had largely to rely, at first, on published memoirs. Several of the American ones were very complete, but nothing like an accurate understanding of the Australian part in the conference could be reached until we



eventually obtained access to the confidential records of the government. I doubt if these are complete, and to reach them required a special reference to cabinet; the support of Mr. W. M. Hughes was always given to the historians in such matters, his outlook being uniformly broad. It is greatly to be hoped that his private collection of documents may some day reach the Commonwealth archives.

It was in the case of our medical history that the disappearance or mislaying of records caused the most serious results, in some cases robbing the nation of information of the utmost value. For example, all the pre-war records of the medical examination of recruits for the citizen forces had been destroyed. These would have given a clue to the condition of the nation, showing as they did the causes of unfitness at various ages, both at the time of recruiting and during subsequent service; but they were destroyed because money could not be provided to enable the statisticians to deal with them, a fact which can only imply that not only our leaders but, probably, the nation as a whole was almost unbelievably ignorant of the national interest in this matter. The great sums spent in America to obtain just such data, and the world-wide results in the encouragement of physical fitness, provide a striking contrast. The records of the New Guinea expedition, except some in current use, were also destroyed. The medical records returned from the A.I.F. overseas (other than those with the War Records section) were also destined for destruction when two officers of Base Records saved them.

The papers concerning the origin of the A.I.F. tunic, which had been studied and quoted by Colonel Butler when writing his first volume, had been destroyed when next he asked for them. Most of the records of the military general hospitals in Australia have gone; so, apparently, have all the statistical medical records of the military districts—the six states—except for duplicate copies that were sent to Melbourne during part of the war and a few rescued by Colonel Butler and Mr. Withers. The personal records of General Bridges, first commander of the A.I.F., are said to have been destroyed.

By the mistake of an English authority the clinical records of the A.I.F., after being dealt with for the War Office by the Medical Research Committee and handed over to the British Ministry of Pensions, were destroyed. Canada had duplicated her cards and had intimated that the duplicates in charge of the British Pensions Department might be destroyed; the Australian cards were destroyed with them. Australia had had an earlier opportunity to save these cards, but had left them in England, not realising their value.



Indeed, at that stage only the medical historian foresaw how important to the Pensions Department would be the information contained in them. What we have had and are still having to pay through the lack of them will never be known.

For the medical historian there was, fortunately, another resource. The 'admission and discharge books' of our medical units had been preserved; and by over three years work on these, painfully extracting a sufficient proportion of the figures to give accuracy within a small margin of error, Colonel Graham Butler and his assistant, Mr. Withers (now Captain, in charge of medical records, A.I.F.), reconstructed the data for Australia's medical statistics of the war, using—I believe for the first time in military-medical history—the causation of diseases as the basis of his statistical classification. Yet, probably for less than it cost to produce these statistics, the cards could have been brought to Australia and analysed.

### *The Danger of Short Cuts*

Of the military operations, however, the records were so ample that the problem of filling the gaps was less constant than that of dealing with the mass of material. The official records provided by far the greater part of this. It was obviously impossible to read everything; yet in many files any page might prove to contain vital information. Perhaps the most important lesson that I learned was that, in carrying out an historical task of this kind, a short-cut was never safe; to make the task practicable I had to use all my knowledge of the subject matter to make possible the discarding of files, or of parts of them, of which the reading was unnecessary. Thus for certain periods the records of troops at rest out of the line could be merely skimmed, with an eye open for important papers or passages—such as a letter from a prisoner of war describing the fight which perhaps he alone could record, or a note on the increased provision of Lewis guns for each battalion, or on the introduction of a new system of attack or the state of reinforcements. It was hardly ever safe to skip except in the most obvious cases.

Yet again and again in the course of the work we were forced to try methods that would shorten the time of production in order both to avoid expense for the government and to hasten the work for readers and subscribers, who were naturally impatient. There seemed to be several ways in which this might be done. For example, in dealing with military operations—of which accounts are given in the diaries and appendices of a long hierarchy of headquarters, as well as in those of the infantry and pioneer battalions, divisional



and corps artillery, engineers, medical staff and units, and so forth—it constantly appeared to be a waste of effort to read and note down each of these accounts, which in some cases would be largely a compilation from the others; and especially as my own diaries and notes contained still other accounts, often much more detailed, of the same events, while the regimental histories of both sides furnished yet another set.

But the experiment, which we were bound to make, of ignoring some of these accounts, led almost invariably to serious defects, which, fortunately, were usually recognized before the first draft was written. Though largely parallel, these accounts almost always contained special information. Moreover, the files of one staff would often contain matter for which one would normally look to another file. For example, a good intelligence officer from brigade or even division, might, after contact with the fighting units, bring back a truer and more detailed report than that rendered by a battalion or even a company commander.

Moreover, attached to the records of the higher staffs there were often the original reports of important incidents, or notes dropped by airmen for the higher staffs in battle, or records of courts of enquiry, all containing vital information, which one would normally look for in other files. The only safe course was at least to glance at every document in any file that might reasonably be expected to contain relevant matter.

It is, of course, possible for this to be done by others than the historian. The British War Office engaged a staff of highly competent writers, including barristers and playwrights, to summarize the records of, at least, the Gallipoli campaign. Probably the employment of a staff to make a *précis* is the only practicable method of dealing with records so mountainous as the British. However, we had not the staff for this; nor, with records such as ours, was it beyond the power of the historians to grapple with the original files. A *précis* also has its drawbacks; it is bound to be influenced in form and content by the outlook and knowledge of its compilers. Sir Henry Gullett, who worked for a time upon the records of the Sinai and Palestine campaigns in the British Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, told me that he would not trust even the most capable writer to make a *précis* for his own work. In the last stages of my own task, however, Mr. Bazley condensed for me the records of the technical services.

The danger of a short-cut was well illustrated during the writing of volume v, which began with the patrolling operations of the winter of 1917-18, in the low, muddy waste beside the Lys river,



where the Australian infantry developed much of the skill that afterwards, during April to July 1918, did so much towards making the Germans near Amiens ripe for the allied offensive of 8 August, Ludendorff's 'Black Day.' The records of that winter patrolling comprised a number of general descriptions in the official records, the regimental histories and my own notes, and also the actual reports of the patrols, of which probably several hundred were still with the unit records. To read and digest these reports would take certainly many weeks, and as the result would fill part of only one chapter (and we calculated upon some twenty-four chapters a volume) it seemed right to rely upon the general summaries and merely glance at the patrol reports.

I did this and found in the summaries many descriptions of how No-man's-land was completely controlled by our patrols, up to and beyond the enemy's wire entanglements; so I drafted that part of the chapter on this information. Turning next to the German regimental histories, of which perhaps twenty described in some detail events in the same area, I read with astonishment many passages that almost duplicated the Australian accounts. The Germans, too, looked back on that time as one of exceptional advantage in the training of regimental patrols, and spoke proudly of the achievement. It became evident that the draft of the chapter must be discarded and the whole episode carefully studied. I was compelled, after all, to read the patrol reports and analyse the results, as well as those recorded in the German narrative. The conclusion was that the Australian command of No-man's-land had been exaggerated—almost certainly through some writers attributing to the period December to March a state of affairs that came to exist in the period from April to July. Actually, German patrols, boldly led, were active from December to March; but the Australians were more numerous and much more successful—in the German narratives were several statements to the effect that, in spite of repeated efforts and bold leadership, their patrol enterprises seldom succeeded in capturing prisoners and often resulted in the loss of valuable men.

The attempt to find a short-cut had led to the waste of, perhaps, ten days' work. Consequently, when it came to the study of the famous 'Peaceful Penetration' campaign of April to July 1918 no short-cut was attempted. The influence of those patrols on the great events of 1918 rendered the longer method well worth the trouble.

In producing his economic and political volume, Professor Scott found the short-cut equally dangerous. Here, however, the tempta-



tion to take it was even stronger, inasmuch as the whole story of what happened in Australia and at the peace conference had to be condensed into a single volume, and the subjects of wool, wheat, shipping, repatriation, war finance and so forth, had each to be compressed, as far as possible, into a single chapter. There existed excellent reports made by whatever authority had ultimately been evolved to deal with those departments of national economy, and, at first sight, it looked as if the work would be easy; but that expectation proved to be wholly deceptive. The reports in question gave excellent surveys of the final systems and organizations; but the problems that had originally faced ministers, departments, business leaders and producers were in many cases barely touched upon. Yet the period in which the real difficulties were grappled with, and their solution gradually hammered out, was that which preceded the setting up of the commissions and other authorities. Those difficulties had been largely thrashed out by the formal or informal committees, often voluntary in composition, that had been formed when the problems first emerged. By the time the final authority was set up, some of the main difficulties had vanished. The records of them, if preserved, were most easily obtained from or through the former chairmen of the committees.

Probably every student of historical sources knows how, as he notes some point—a motive or an action, on or off the main stage—there comes to him in a flash the notion that this point illuminates some whole phase of his subject. He seems to see now why a certain conference was not held, or why some leaders urged delay. I constantly conceived these bright ideas, and found that they were nearly always wrong. After some keen reading in the direction indicated I would usually come, with a minor shock of disappointment, upon some unquestionable fact inconsistent with that bright interpretation. There was then nothing to do but to read more deeply and widely until in most cases one reached the conviction that, of the facts laid bare, there was only one reasonable explanation. I learned, too, that when one felt a momentary doubt as to the accuracy of a statement, it was never safe to ignore that doubt; again and again it was found to be justified; the statement, though apparently at first hand, might have been based on second-hand evidence, which, however authoritative, was nearly always unreliable in detail.

### *A Technique of Note-Taking*

With rare exception, every statement was based upon notes made when reading. The first step was to marshal the sources for the period under study—say, for a fortnight of some tour of the



Australian Corps in the front line. The records-assistant brought in the official records and spread them out in orderly stacks (G.H.Q., Army, flanking Armies and Corps, Australian Corps and divisions)—sometimes with those for the next period immediately behind them. When these were finished with my relevant diaries and notebooks, perhaps thirty-five of them, were brought in, with a list, to be ticked off as I read, of the relevant pages. The maps and air photographs were piled on other tables and the books on shelves around the room.

In making notes, the great number of the sources precluded any reliance upon mere references to the page or file numbers. I often tried to avoid the expenditure of time involved in making notes or extracts, but the interruption of writing by the necessity of finding and re-reading the passages, and the clogging of one's desk and the surrounding tables by mountains of books and files (which was the only alternative to walking each time to the shelves and pigeon-holes, bringing back the source-document and then replacing it) rendered that system mechanically impossible as well as mentally irritating. Occasionally, of course, it was the only reasonable method—for example, it did not usually pay to copy down, word for word, passages totalling, say, 1,000 words; in the rare cases in which it would be necessary to make such quotations, reference to the source would not materially interrupt the work. But normally a full note had to be taken of every useful point; and where it was probable that the source would have to be quoted in the history verbatim, it usually saved time and worry to transcribe the passage.

Similar difficulties, mechanical and mental, made reliance on loose-leaf notes, which I first tried, impracticable except as an occasional help—for example, in taking notes when reading in the train or elsewhere away from the office. In dealing with fighting operations the number of the notes relating to, say, one morning's events was usually so great that the result of an hour's reading would be two or three piles of paper mounting like files of grocers' bills, so that it required at least a minute to find any particular note.

I personally found by far the most useful method to be to devote to each main phase of the subject (say, to one battle, or to one winter's campaign) a large notebook, usually of some 200 pages, foolscap size, with the edge of the pages incised for marginal indexing. I usually cut the edges myself, allowing for some forty subject headings. Before taking the first note I filled in, perhaps, two-thirds of the headings, choosing those that were certain to be required and leaving blanks for other subjects. Related subjects



were generally kept near together, and I found it useful to mark some groups of the marginal headings with a particular colour—say, red for British and Australian operations, red stripes for American, blue for French and green for German. By this means one could turn up the required page of the notebook with little more than a single movement of the hand.

In making the notes of a battle—especially of one of which the course had never yet been determined by subsequent study—I found it of the greatest assistance to regard the open page of the notebook almost as a map, and to enter, say, on the extreme left all references to the extreme left flank of operations, on the right notes referring to the right flank, in the centre those relating to the centre—and so on. The notes would proceed down the page in order of time—happenings at 1 a.m. being recorded near the top, and those of later hours lower down. Actions of brigade or divisional headquarters would be noted either down the centre of the page or on a previous page.

This process made it possible to take in a battle situation almost at a glance. It often became apparent that two or more notes related to the same incident, though one had always to be cautious in assuming this, for error was easy. During battle men were sometimes unaware of the names of the positions and landmarks near which they fought. If they were wounded, and afterwards met soldiers in hospital who spoke of 'Quinn's Post' or 'Pear Trench,' they sometimes jumped to the conclusion that these were the places at which they, too, had been in action, and in letters or other subsequent accounts would wrongly record this. In collecting my own notes after battle I had soon realized that many of the place-names given in such accounts were wrong, and I had therefore made a practice of always getting men to tell me what officers they had seen at each stage of the action. The names of these officers occurring in several notes gave a good clue to location.

While this geographical system of arranging notes was peculiarly suitable in studying the innumerable experiences of men and units that went to make up the narrative for the front line, it was not so suitable for the arrangement of the notes recording the action of higher headquarters. Towards the end of the war the records of all headquarters down to brigade were largely contained in long series of summaries of outgoing and incoming messages. It usually proved best to note these in the form of chronological lists, which sometimes covered two or three pages of the notebook. In such a case it was often helpful to mark with different colours those relating to different subjects—for example, air reports, blue; reports



as to enemy units, green; orders for reliefs or reinforcements, purple; reports pin-pointing the front line, red—and so forth; by picking out each colour down the page one could quickly follow the developments in each of those activities.

To avoid great trouble and delay it was necessary to begin every note with a reference to its source, and, as this process occupied, in the aggregate, much time, it was necessary to use the shortest possible symbol. Thus '178/42' meant the 42nd page of the 178th volume of my diaries. '5GSms/Ap4' meant that the information came from a message or other document appended to the diary of the General Staff, 5th Australian Division, and dated 4 April (of the year to which the notebook related). The accidental omission to record the source of some note constantly resulted in hours—sometimes days—of most irritating search, which was often necessary either to ascertain the authority of the statement noted, or to find some passage closely associated with it, but not originally thought worthy of inclusion in the note. Where many consecutive notes came from the same source a marginal line could indicate this.

So much time was lost in searching for passages that had been read but not thought worthy of note that the original conception of what might be useful had to be much enlarged. The judgment on this point was one of the most difficult that the historian was daily called upon to make. There was a temptation, also, to note points of outstanding interest but not intended for this particular history, although if now overlooked they might never be made known—at any rate to most Australians. Such points would often crop up in reading the German histories, or the records and statistics of the higher British staffs, and I occasionally noted the page reference; to do more would have reduced still further the already slow progress of the work. Of course, thousands of the notes that seemed likely to be of use were never in fact used; and all kinds of interesting scraps of information, much of it with a strong Australian interest, are to be found in the pages labelled 'general.' Most of them are too unconnected to provide anything more than a collection of 'general knowledge.' They may be studied some day, when these notebooks join the rest of my war records in the Australian War Memorial collection.

### *Writing the History*

I usually drafted the chapters in manuscript and revised them, first in the manuscript, again in the typescript, and yet again in proof (owing to the cost, corrections in proof in all the later volumes

were arranged so that inserted matter filled precisely the same space as matter deleted). The text of some of the earlier volumes was read, I believe, for various purposes more than twenty times before publication. We succeeded in reducing this to about twelve, but we never managed to reduce to much less than a year the time between completion of the writing and publication. The indexing alone took many months, of which two, at least, were necessarily subsequent to the delivery of the paged proofs.

A habit against which one had always to be on the watch was that of slipping into military jargon. Just as policemen giving evidence, and reporters describing football, military men tend to use a set and stilted diction, either from habit or because it saves them the trouble of thinking out more descriptive language, or because it gives an air of learning. Most good military writers, and some quite good generals, make a conscious effort to avoid this habit.

In the case of our histories the habit would have been fatal. In the first place our volumes were written for the general reader—women as well as men. In the second, they were intentionally detailed, and jargon obscures detail—you use a set term to cover all sorts of different actions and experiences, whereas we felt that it was our particular business to describe those experiences and the reactions of the persons who underwent them, whether these were scouts creeping along a ditch or generals waiting anxiously for news of the welfare of men whom they have committed to a nasty night attack.

After that of combining detail with a wide view—showing both the wood and the trees, perhaps the chief problem in writing was that of the method of presentation—whether to tell the story of both combatants at once, in the light of after knowledge, or to open before the reader the story of one side only, letting him see the problems as the leaders and troops of that side saw them, and unveiling the other side's dispositions and actions only when the narrative reaches the point at which the first side began to grasp them. This method is more dramatic, enabling the reader to put himself in the position of the troops and leaders, to be surprised at whatever surprised them, and to feel suspense, anxiety, relief as they felt it. In the case of our official war history it was not a difficult method to follow; our story, naturally, had to be told mainly from one side, but there was available, in the regimental histories and other records of the other side, ample material for most interesting notes to be inserted as soon as the curtain could be lifted. I therefore adopted this method practically throughout.



I followed the British Official Historian, Sir James Edmonds, in giving the enemy narrative in smaller type; but instead of keeping it, as he does, to the end of each chapter, we inserted ours as soon as possible after the description of the corresponding episodes of our own story. The same small type was also used for quotations, but, to avoid confusion, I always made clear in the first few words when this type was used for the enemy narrative. This was easily done by beginning 'German records state,' or 'It is now known from German sources,' and I have never heard that the result was confusing. In many military histories enemy units are specified in italics. We thought, however, that, within our limited range, readers could be better helped by inserting the words 'Turkish,' 'German,' 'Austrian' wherever doubt could arise.

In the same way I did not always follow the rule that in describing military operations you begin with the right flank and work leftwards; sometimes it was more convenient to do the opposite, or even to begin with the centre. Nevertheless, one seldom departed from that rule without hesitation—it is an excellent convention, especially where the order of the forces in battle has to be stated. Thus to write 'the 11th, 14th, 3rd and 1st Battalions' normally implies that they were in that order from right to left, and the convention is so well understood that it might mislead the reader to adopt, *without explanation*, any other system.

### *The Maps*

In the matter of maps the Australian history adopted its own system. We realized that the volumes would be bulky, and that folded maps were likely to become torn and detached. I therefore decided to avoid, if possible, including any map that could not be incorporated as a page folded round or in the centre of a section of the text. This limited the largest maps to the size of two pages. But I had also to clear up geographical doubts by inserting in the text (as I had done in my diaries) a marginal sketch map wherever a geographical question was likely to arise in the reader's mind. Each of these tiny maps need only answer a single question, though many do more. As we reached each campaign the draughtsman made a number of base maps of the ground likely to be covered, stippling in the valleys by hand, keeping the dots far enough apart to allow of a reduction to at least one-tenth, often to one-sixteenth, without the dots blurring into one another when printed. These drafts were sent to the Government Printer, who produced from 20 to 100 copies of each. We were provided with blank base maps of the ground. On finishing each chapter, wherever a geographical



question arose I marked 'sketch' in the margin, and every few months had to spend a week or more drawing on the base maps in blue pencil the situation to be illustrated. The draughtsman then produced, over my rough pencilling, the finished sketch.

In an average battle chapter there would be thirty such sketches, but in some chapters seventy or more. Writing in such detail as we did it was necessary to keep the main plan constantly before the reader, and to use the details as illustrating its development. This was done by constantly summarising what had been achieved at each important stage and by inserting sketch maps showing the relevance of the detail to the general situation.

It was seldom that more than eight sketches could be drafted in a day. It was often necessary to show the front line of divisions or armies north and south of the sector held by the Australians, and sometimes the whole front from the North Sea to the Swiss border. The position of the front on the proper day would have to be specially ascertained, since the data for the chapter would often contain no exact details of it. It was necessary to consult the French official history, with its excellent maps, or British divisional histories or diaries, or any other source that ingenuity could suggest. Moreover, it not infrequently happened that the records referred to a haystack, claypit, or copse, unmarked on any map, but a pivotal point in one day's fighting. Till that day the place might have had no name, and next day it might be out of the picture. In such cases the best course usually was to search for it in the aeroplane photographs of the nearest dates, and though this might occupy a day or two the problem was almost invariably solved. The haystack would be detected on the photographs by the white circle made by the cattle trampling round it, the brickpit by the shadowed bank and men's tracks, and so on.

In the coloured full-page or two-page maps, of which there were a number in some volumes, the heights were shown by contours; for the sake of readers who might not understand these, the valleys were also shaded. This had the disadvantage of requiring printing by process block, and the shading also tended to obscure the contours; a clearer method would have been to colour the layers, but this involved the use of many extra colours and would have increased the expense.

### *Routine and Recreation*

Naturally it is almost impossible to pursue a single task for twenty-three years without sometimes feeling a little 'stale.' We began the task working very long hours—indeed practically without a break except for sleep and meals, a practice to which we had grown



accustomed in the war. Volumes i and ii—and almost certainly vii (Gullett's *Sinai and Palestine*) and viii (Cutlack's *Australian Flying Corps*) were produced at that sort of pressure, as was the photographic volume. All these had been published by the early months of 1925. My staff and I had instituted a little regular recreation at Tuggranong—sometimes tennis before dinner; and in 1924 we and the neighbouring farmers ran a successful cricket team, successful at least in providing us with the necessary amount of running in the outfield. But it was not until our office was transferred to the Victoria Barracks in Sydney in 1925 that I found it necessary for health's sake to adopt more or less the regular office hours, mine, however, being largely at night. These we continued to keep until the last two or three years, when the pressure required for ending the general and medical histories gradually drove us back to our old hours of almost continuous work, until well into each night, week-ends included.

Yet the work remained fascinating throughout, not only to the historian but to the staff. For me there was the interest of a great theme—the reaction of a young, free, democratic people to this great test—slowly working itself out to the climax of the astonishing victory in 1918. But to all of us there was the excitement of constantly discovering unsuspected facts, or the truth as to events of whose causes we had previously known only one side; and of exhibiting to our own people and others many facts that would have undoubtedly been disputed unless accompanied by their discovered proofs; and, above all, of being able to right many wrongs, and to bring to thousands of actions recognition that they would never otherwise have obtained.

Few people have the power that falls to a war historian in this way. In the last volume to be published we were able to cite more than 2,500 names in the course of the story—in other words to furnish nearly that number of illustrations of its developments and pledged of its accuracy. That statement, of course, at once generates the suspicion that the narrative is clogged with names, but I think the experience of readers is the opposite: that this detail illuminates the work, and that the particulars, footnoted by my staff against nearly every name, tie this national history into the everyday life of our people.

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## GEOPOLITICS AND THE PACIFIC<sup>1</sup>

THE cult of geopolitics is gaining new adherents in the Anglo-Saxon countries. This appears to be due partly to the search for some rationalization of to-day's chaotic world, partly to the carefully calculated mysticism that has been injected into their writings by the German geopoliticians. The diplomatic and military successes of the Axis powers have themselves tended to produce a feeling that the Axis geopoliticians, the moulders of policy and strategy, have found some magic formula, a formula which, once revealed to ourselves, would mean the end of all our uncertainties and indecisions and the discovery of a plain and certain way to victory. Inevitably, false ideas of the content and validity of German geopolitical thought and of the possibilities of the 'science' of geopolitics in general are produced in this atmosphere and many of the self-styled leaders of the cult are those academic jacks-of-all-trades who are excited by the thought of, but technically unable to attain to, the status of an Anglo-Saxon Haushofer.

The mere reading of German geopolitical literature does not make a geopolitician. Geopolitics can no more be learnt from a text-book than can sculpture, as much because its subject-matter is not capable of final, objective exposition as because none of the outstanding geopoliticians ever set down in print all their premises and conclusions. Haushofer and his disciples are politicians before they are geopoliticians; their ideas and ambitions are perfectly clear-cut and definite but they know that before they are realized in action and consummated they must be accepted emotionally as well as intellectually and become part of the national spirit. The cold calculation of the study is therefore cloaked by a poetic word-spinning in public utterance; the approach, the material and the phrasing of geopolitical articles are carefully selected to use all the opportunities that exist for translating geopolitical recommendations into political action. Haushofer is at times writing for Hitler and 'deluding the ordinary reader; at other times he is aiming through the pressure of public opinion to influence Hitler; yet again he tries to talk to all Germans while keeping his meaning hidden from non-Germans.

1. *Geopolitik des Pazifischen Ozeans*, by Karl Haushofer, Berlin, 1938, 3rd edit. The quotations in the text are from a translation prepared by Dr. A. H. McDonald, and Dr. R. B. Farrell, of the University of Sydney.



The German geopoliticians of the Haushofer school are therefore hard to read. They have invented a jargon which cannot be translated easily; the cloak of mysticism is sometimes opaque to all but those who are in close intellectual harmony with the writers; there is often a 'limited exposition' of a topic because of political exigencies or in accordance with the tactics of psychological appeal. But in addition to this difficulty in getting at the real meaning, German geopolitics cannot, for another reason, be taken over by Anglo-Saxons into their own thinking. As Professor Weigert points out<sup>2</sup> 'there is no such thing as a general science of geopolitics;' there is a German geopolitical outlook based on the postulates of the Haushofer school, there is a Japanese geopolitical outlook associated with the *Bushido* cult, there could (and should) be an Australian geopolitical outlook. None of the conclusions of any geopolitical school in any one period and country are likely to apply to any other period and/or country. There are no geopolitical laws and principles of universal validity. From the body of factual material which is the common property of all nations there are derived points of view and plans for political and strategical action which are conditioned by the politico-moral philosophy of the geopolitician himself and by his interpretation of his nation's ambitions and destiny. To suppose otherwise, to accept the generalizations of the Haushofer school as scientifically-established historical truths, is a fallacy that unfortunately more than the ignorant and the very impressionable fall into; it is also playing the German game, for the pseudo-scientific character of much German geopolitical writing is calculated precisely to persuade foreign readers into this fallacy. Propaganda can be geopolitical, and geopolitics often has a propagandist object.

Some minds, of course, find Haushofer's writings peculiarly attractive. Here is to be found a rationalization of the multitudinous and apparently unrelated facts of geography and history, of the forces and occurrences of the day-to-day world which so many people find so bewildering; they provide stability amidst apparent chaos, they have the appeal of the authoritarian to those who crave strong leadership in a changing world; they are apparently based on an extraordinarily wide and deep scholarship. These people are always attracted by a determinist philosophy; Spengler's *Decline of the West*, Calvinistic predestination, Ratzelian anthropo-geography all have the 'compulsive' and authoritarian character that supplies an intellectual and emotional need of great urgency. On Haushofer the influence of Ratzel is very great and, although he avoids the scientific excesses which marred the work of such disciples of Ratzel

2. 'Haushofer and the Pacific,' by Hans Weigert, *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1942, p. 782.

as Ellen Churchill Semple and which eventually led many geographers to ignore the more provocative parts of Ratzel's work, the deterministic element is still great in his geopolitics.

Haushofer defines geopolitics as 'the scientific basis of the art of political action in the struggle of national forms of society for their living space on the earth.' The 'scientific basis' is provided largely by the facts of geographic regionalism but there is no field of knowledge which is ignored in the search for significant material—anthropology, history, law, literature, religion, sociology, psychology, all contribute facts which form the basis for geopolitical generalizations. These generalizations indicate the most desirable lines of action *for the nation making the enquiry*; since German geopolitics is primarily concerned with enlarging the German living space (*Lebensraum*), most of the generalizations have to do with the possibilities of such enlargement. But geopolitics does not deal with single situations and events; whoever opens the book under review here with the hope that it will provide a plan of action for either Axis or Allied Nations will be disappointed. Geopolitics takes a wider view and a longer view than this; the Sino-Japanese war is in truth a China Incident in the long retrospect and prospect of Sino-Japanese relations. What the 'science' aims to do is to show the great trends in world politics as determined by geography and history—the main compelling tides in human affairs as indicated by the rise and fall of the nations—so that the policy of the individual nation may be laid down to conform with and take advantage of them. 'The decisions of world policy are set against the background of geopolitics.' The 'Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean' was written 'to bring the Germans to see realities overseas;' not because of an academic interest in Pacific geopolitics, for Haushofer ardently desires a return of Germany to the Pacific, but so that German policy may be rightly framed to bring about this ambition. The successful geopolitician of to-day is a Machiavelli with a general science degree and a close advisory relation with the nation's rulers.

This point is worth stressing. Haushofer believes, for instance, that Germany lost a great opportunity when she was forced out of the Pacific, the most important area of the future, largely as the result of geopolitical ignorance; Germany's position could have been maintained 'by an oceanic policy carried through with subtle understanding of national psychology and with true geopolitical art,' if, in other words, Germany had been able to effect a 'symbiosis' with the native cultures of the peoples of East Asia. Even now there exist great opportunities for Germany in the Pacific; the very fact that Germany has no trading posts and fortifications there to irritate



people who are striving for complete independence from the Anglo-Saxon powers is an advantage; unfriendly alliances can be avoided and 'Germany will be the more welcome to East Asiatic peoples because we have no power there and because they are sympathetic with our own sufferings and strivings.' But Haushofer does not go beyond this to a detailed plan of political action. He has set out the main trends in Pacific geopolitics and shown how Germany may fit into them; 'geopolitics begins where prognosis is possible,' but the geopolitician does not attempt to do the work of the diplomat and the soldier.

Haushofer's leading ideas are not many. Much the most important of them is the concept of 'national living space' and this is very definitely a dynamic concept. It is derived direct from Ratzel who enunciated a 'law of expanding spaces:' 'Every land and sea is to be regarded as a space which is first known, inhabited and politically fulfilled before it begins to work outwards. This new inner development begins with small spaces, overcomes them and advances from them to the greater spaces. Out of this struggle for space we see greater political regions appear, and the price of victory is the conquest of the subject space.' But only the nation which is vigorous endeavours or requires to enlarge its living space; the nation which has not the urge to enlarge is a dying nation—and France, with its stagnant population, its insistence on the maintenance of the European *status quo*, its reactionary colonial policy, is the best example of this. Britain also is a dying power, partly because the 'will to rule' of the British people is disappearing as shown, for instance, in the growing independence of the dominions and the growing difficulty of holding India, partly because the centre of world power has moved from the neighbourhood of the British Isles and the North Atlantic and Britain is now face to face with young, vigorous nations whose expansion is ultimately certain. Working from this concept, it is easy to classify the powers as 'vital' and 'renovating,' or 'decadent' and 'resisting' nations; the deterministic element enters here since Haushofer assumes that the pressure of the first group on the second is inexorable and their victory ultimately assured.

Haushofer's most valuable contribution to geopolitics is his elaboration of the idea of 'space.' For geographers there is nothing very new in it, for they share in a long tradition of global thinking; Humboldt, Ratzel, Mackinder, Kjellen, Bowman, Wegener, Griffith Taylor, Koppen, have all trained us to think in terms of continents, oceans and the largest natural regions. But others interested in the

background to world politics have not always had this training; historians, in particular, have often, deliberately or not, confined themselves to narrow spaces and few years. For the intelligent reader of, say, secondary-school education Haushofer has all the appeal of an H. G. Wells, a Van Loon or a Breasted—who throw a girdle round the world and all time in one volume in a popular edition—*plus* the heady urge to power and conquest of the Tanaka Memorial. He returns again and again to his injunction that Germans must learn to think in terms of large spaces, not only because global thinking is in itself a sign of vitality and strength, but also because it is only through the study of large spaces that one can discover the major geopolitical forces of the world and so plan to take advantage of them. It was largely through Haushofer's influence that a new and virile *Weltanschauung* was born in Germany, that the Auslands-Institut took the whole world for its province and sent its agents through all continents and over all seas, that Hitler's programme in *Mein Kampf* was so sweepingly global and not confined to the Europe which is his only personal experience. It is only now that the United Nations are beginning to talk of global strategy; Haushofer and the Comintern have both ingrained the idea in the minds of their adherents.

Mackinder supplied one of Haushofer's leading ideas. The English geographer was seized of the strategic significance of the position of the British Isles as one of the marginal peninsulas of the European continent. Britain was a tiny appendage to the enormous land-mass of Europe-Asia, Mackinder's 'world-island;' her power depended on domination of the seas which hemmed in the powers of the great continent but was always vulnerable to and impotent against a combination of those powers. The combination most greatly to be feared was one which controlled the 'heartland,' the inner citadel of the 'world-island,' stretching from the Elbe to the Yang-tze, from the North-West Frontier and the Pamir knot to the Arctic tundras; against such a combination British control of the seas would be strategically useless and could be eventually destroyed by armed action from the centre outwards against the British naval bases and way-stations. To prevent such a combination, and particularly to prevent German control of such a combination, Mackinder advocated a British alliance with Russia.

Haushofer took over these ideas and adapted them to German uses. He sees a permanent geopolitical conflict between the oceanic and the continental powers; he sees Germany's opportunity to achieve world domination in the possibility of gaining domination of the 'world-island;' he looks forward to the collapse of British sea-power



and empire and to Germany's consequent emergence as an oceanic as well as a continental power. Alliance with Russia is the first step (domination may be expected to follow because the Soviet has no real national coherence and because of the strong pressure that German efficiency and morale will exert); alliance with Japan is also necessary to preserve the other end of the line and Japan must be led to compose her differences with China in the interests of combined strength. Then the combination will stand over against the British Empire and the United States in a position of enormous power. The application of this oceanic-continental contrast to the geopolitics of the Pacific we shall discuss later. We should not fail to note, however, that two of Haushofer's most constant pleas—that Germany should come to a peaceful arrangement with Russia so that the resources of the 'heartland' may be preserved for the wider struggle, and that Japan should come to an arrangement with China lest the weakness of the two should allow of control of East Asia by the oceanic powers—have been rejected by the Axis leaders; the geopoliticians have failed here in gaining political acceptance for their ideas and must be fearing the effect of their rejection.

Another pervading idea in Haushofer, and one which has special application to the Pacific, is the 'Pan' idea. He does not talk of the coming German Empire of Europe or of the World; but the words 'Pan-Europe,' 'Pan-Asia,' 'Pan-Pacific' recur time and again. It is plain from the discussion that what he envisages is a federation of nations within each of these major regions, but the federation is to be under the domination of one leading state; further discussion is always vague but, although there is much talk of self-determination, the word 'leadership' is so frequently used that anyone familiar with Nazi social philosophy can easily clarify it.

So much for the more general aspects of Haushofer's geopolitics. It has been worth treating them because the book under review is as much a general guide to geopolitics as a special treatment of the Pacific. Haushofer has always been particularly interested in the Pacific; he spent some time in Japan and has written much on the Japanese question; he also believes that the Pacific is fast becoming one of the most important geopolitical areas of the world. It was, therefore, comparatively easy and undeniably attractive to him to combine the general with the particular in this study. In his view there is occurring a shift in world power which is comparable with that which followed the trans-Atlantic and circum-African discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when the Mediterranean concept gave way to the Atlantic and the Indo-Oceanic—a change, incidentally, which escaped the notice of German contem-

poraries and from which they failed to benefit 'because they had their gaze fixed on Italy.' 'The way from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic conception then is the way from the Atlantic to the Pacific now.' In the Pacific area 'supernational organization may arise in economics, civilization, and politics in a way which Europe and the Atlantic have not discovered, and in a way to which the Peace of Versailles and the League of Nations run counter;' this is the excuse for study of the Pacific and the reason why Germans, in particular, should be interested in the area.

The Pacific covers an enormous area but 'the Anglo-Saxons have roused this slumbering world in a way that its own people did not do because the latter instinctively wanted to live in anarchy or vaguely feared the dangers of civilization and organization on their national consciousness. Now the Pacific is awake and seeks its own law of existence. This is clearly different from that of the Atlantic, just as the oceans and their coasts are different; more autarchic in all anthropo-geographical creations, and in expansion preserving the interconnection of its parts. The spaces that divide (in the Pacific) are greater. Yet the power of division, when once overcome, is smaller, and the unifying idea of the single great ocean is stronger.'

This unifying idea of the Pacific is shown by the attempts at common organization that have been made:

this awakening is seen in the idea of the Pan-American railway system along the coast, in the new American approach to the South Seas situation, and in the inner reconstruction of the Australian Commonwealth. In Australia we see this in the choice of the new capital which in a far-sighted way has in mind a possible union with New Zealand (*sic*). From similar ideas arose the structure of the Japanese Island Empire with its leading idea of developing to become the State of the East Asiatic Archipelagoes, unifying the broken lines of islands set in front of East Asia in the marginal waters of the Pacific. From this also arose the East Asiatic Union for Legal Protection, the first idea of uniting East Asia from the coasts of India past the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, the mouths of the China rivers and the islands of Japan, i.e., the broken western margin of the Pacific and the unity of the monsoon lands as a forerunner of the rise of South-east Asia to self-determination. These are all signs of Pacific thought, reflected also in the Washington Conference, treating the whole sphere of the Pacific Ocean according to its own laws, and not just the law of the British Empire, so as to fill it with comprehensive and super-national forms—in short, to organize it.

Haushofer sees this development towards 'Pacific organization,' by the building up of super-national forms (not, be it noted, international), as one of the most important aspects of Pacific geopolitics.

But this is too simple a picture, and the Pacific has several geopolitical characteristics that are distinctive to it.

In all Pacific countries we find the trend towards combination for the utmost development of their living-space, leading to concentration and isolation, in contrast



to the expansionist centrifugal trends of the Atlantic and Inner-Eurasian world. The centripetal character of the Pacific, with coherence within frontiers, is unmistakable. This can be explained by the wide space and separating force of the great sea which at first do not seem capable of being overcome, as compared with the small single region shut in by mountains, deserts and plateaus. It is not only the characteristic of all old civilization on the Pacific margins, for example the ancient Japanese, Chinese, Central American and Peruvian civilizations; it also extends, since the discovery of the Pacific by the aggressive Atlantic powers, to many peculiarities of the forms of society which have arisen as a result of this, for example in the new Japanese Empire, the United States, the Australian Commonwealth and New China. . . . Arising from this Pacific characteristic we find repeated attempts to draw back into themselves with extreme defensive measures, unlike the Atlantic world which is completely committed to its unquiet game of power politics.

This geopolitical character is indeed unlike that of Europe. As Haushofer points out, it would be impossible in Europe for two such great powers as China and Japan to live and develop peacefully alongside each other for more than two thousand years—the only interruption to peaceful cultural interchange between the two being the attempt by a Mongol to invade the Island Empire; the unfortified boundary between Canada and the United States and the absence of the power complex in relations between Australia and New Zealand are further examples of the characteristic. Until recent years there has been no attempt on the part of any Pacific state to build the multi-regional, imperialist state exemplified by the Roman Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Mongol Empire of the Great Khans. Federation of the outlying provinces has, by contrast, been the Pacific way; there is a 'continual rhythm between the imperial and the regional idea,' or, in other words, the power of the provinces is still great even in such regional federations as China, Australia, Canada and the United States.

This 'clinging of the individual natural regions of the Pacific to their self-sufficient political forms and economics is explained partly by their fear of having to conform to their oceanic destiny—a fear we find not only in Japan and the United States, but also in China and Australia, and which has a paralyzing effect for long periods with an intensity which has no parallel on the Atlantic coast.' But as the immensity of the great ocean is mastered by improvements in transport and communication, the Pacific is awakening to a feeling of common destiny and of solidarity; in spite of all the tensions which exist (and Haushofer does not minimize these), this feeling is obvious again and again in the 'specific character of relations between the Pacific powers' and in the contrast which this character offers to that of relations between the Atlantic powers. 'This great surface which cannot be mastered by any of the individual social forms on its edges has a tendency with its space-pressure to bring about a

geopolitical synthesis unlike the Atlantic with its more opposed social forms.' This 'synthesis' is now developing as a result of the tensions and geopolitical forces that are operating in the Pacific, and great changes in the forms and combinations of power are under way. Haushofer speaks again and again of the 'law' which governs these changes:

As the main geopolitical law of the Pacific sea-spaces (as far as its own forms and conditions of life determine its political existence), we believe that we recognize in the history of its organization a greater aversion from extreme purely-violent solutions, and a perceptible and apparent punishment for the violation of this character which is disposed towards equilibrium and which, according to its longer periods, works itself out in greater rhythms; but alongside this, we see perhaps a still more pitiless method of absorbing smaller and weaker individuals by the greater and stronger (in a terrible application of the 'law of increasing spaces'), so that the small members and their distinctive characters disappear almost without a sign.

Haushofer quotes many examples of the 'compromise principle' set out in the first part of this 'law': American dealings with China, Japanese policy in Korea (which according to him allows of Korean cultural self-determination), recent Dutch policy in the Netherlands Indies. But the second pitiless 'principle of imperialism' is seen in the Anglo-French dealings with the South Seas islands where the former political structures and economies, and in cases even the native population itself, have been destroyed for purposes of 'Atlantic' exploitation. The Spaniards vacillated between the two principles; Theodore Roosevelt followed the way of imperialism, Franklin Roosevelt prefers that of compromise, but the United States is always likely to import the 'Atlantic' method of power politics into the alien Pacific world; the Dutch began too late the work of compromise and 'cultural symbiosis,' they 'have not followed the transition of their islands from the Indian "marginal position" to the South Pacific "middle position" with geopolitical understanding' and now they will find it impossible to placate the rising strength of self-determination. So comes punishment for violation of the geopolitical law.

'Self-determination' is a word which looms large, but it is certainly not used in the Wilsonian sense and it is always difficult to discover exactly what Haushofer means by it. To speak of Korean self-determination under Japanese rule as an actuality is, at the least, to strain the word beyond its usual meaning in English. The discernment of the growing self-determination of the peoples of South-east Asia and of India is accompanied by a recognition of Japan's ambitions to become the 'leader' of East Asia. It would appear that



'self-determination' means freedom from domination by the 'Atlantic' powers—and freedom to 'accept' Japan as the synthesizing power and central authority in an East Asian 'federation.' The primitive peoples of the South Seas are seen as suffering from exploitation under the veiled hypocrisy of the Mandate policy; their possible 'regeneration and re-vitalization' are discussed, but there is no programme for their future political and social guidance other than the insistence that they are geopolitically essential as workers in the economic development of the wet tropics.

The tensions which result from the decline of the British-Dutch-French imperialist powers, the growing 'self-determination' of the subject peoples, and the increasing strength and ambitions of the main Pacific powers can be observed in certain geopolitical pressure gauges and seismographs. The chief of these are in two groups: the social forms of the Austral-East Asiatic line of islands, such as Japan, the Philippines and Australia; and the outer margins, the transition zone between the purely Pacific coastal regions of East Asia and the purely continental areas of the interior of Eurasia, and that between the Pacific coast of the Americas and the interior and Atlantic sphere. These tensions have their roots in (1) the fear of people in the densely-populated countries that their living-space will prove inadequate for their needs 'in spite of their readiness to make the best of things or to solve the problem by migration;' (2) the irruption, actual or threatened, of invaders from the continental areas into the Pacific living-space; and (3) the desire of many of the states, both the densely populated and the lightly populated, to protect themselves by the erection of buffer zones. We have not the space to set out in detail Haushofer's exposition of all these tensions, but the more important may be briefly touched on.

Japan's position is, by reason of its geographical situation, of very great geopolitical significance for the whole of the Pacific. It is obviously marked out to act as 'the mediator' between the continental-transitional zones and the Pacific proper; it has cultural and racial connections with much of the South Seas area; because it has always 'in its native-grown social form remained untouched by Atlantic and mainland influences . . . been almost telepathic in its heightened feeling for possible dangers to its independence' . . . and where it feels danger has an enviable capacity for setting the preservation of its self-determination above all other social functions,' it is the only logical leader for East Asia. Japan is already (1924) embarked on realizing this destiny; 'it has for all time left the framework of the autarchic island chain and has entered the orbit of the

world powers controlling countless destinies.. Its empire encircles the Sea of Japan, it is gradually filling up the spaces of Manchuria, it has advanced into the South Seas filling in the vast circle which *via* Formosa, the Carolines, Marshalls, Bonin and Volcano Is. returns to the mother island—an imperial development of great geographical consistency on natural and logical grounds.’

But there are problems facing Japan, particularly the question as to whether she should follow a continental, an oceanic, or a combined continental-oceanic policy. In the northern and central Pacific she finds herself a rival of the United States—the other rival for leadership of the Pacific proper; on the mainland she is faced by China and Russia; to the south there are the ‘Atlantic’ colonial powers and the rising states of Australia and New Zealand. Haushofer would like to see Russo-Japanese collaboration, partly because this would ‘make impossible a divide-and-rule policy by the Anglo-Saxons,’ partly because Japan could then ‘become a friendly partner of a world-wide continental policy (i.e., a German-Russian-Japanese alliance) and yet maintain complete freedom in its Pacific rear (i.e., against the United States); since Russia appears to regard as final its retreat from the Pacific, which began with the giving up of claims to California and ended with the sale of Alaska, there are few real grounds for conflict between the two. ‘A Russian-led Outer Mongolia, a Japanese-led Manchuria could be a permanent combination except for the danger spot of Inner Mongolia,’ but it would also be necessary for the Comintern to give up its plans for world revolution, and Haushofer notes that while Vladivostock is not as strong as it might be, the Soviet now depends on ideas more than guns as its geopolitical weapons.

There are also grave dangers in embarking on a continental policy. ‘Time is not working for a Japanese penetration of Manchuria in a population sense’ since the Chinese far outnumber the Japanese settlers and have a higher rate of increase. If Japan is not to seek collaboration with China and Russia, then she must prevent collaboration between them—particularly Communistic collaboration. The driving of a wedge between them is therefore necessary, but ‘the maintenance of a separation wedge running inland over the areas favourable to Japanese settlement by a system of protective friendship and the driving of the Chinese out of North China is a pure question of power and economic superiority, not of numerical political strength, and this like the Russian domination of various soils must be transitory.’ An attempt to dominate China would be hazardous. China has immense powers of resistance owing to its closely-knit geography and culture, its vast spaces which are a



weapon in themselves, and the energy of the new nationalist movement. More than once Haushofer speaks longingly of the possibility of welding Japan and China into 'a living community,' of the strength of the state that would have 'Japan's soul in China's body;' it is plain that he fears disaster for Germany's ally from a permanent conflict between the two.

It is to the south that Japan may most safely expand, once the continental rear has been safe-guarded by collaboration with the continental powers. The rising tide of 'self-determination' of the native peoples of South-east Asia, the failure of the 'Atlantic' colonial powers to use this development to effect a cultural symbiosis with these peoples in order to retain their leadership, the cultural and racial affinities of the Japanese with the Malays, the fact that the Japanese find the southern environments much more attractive than those to the north and north-west, all provide opportunities which are in line with Japan's own oceanic character and her manifest destiny. Moreover, this expansion could probably be achieved without resort to war if properly handled; some of the most fascinating pages of the book are those in which 'culture geopolitics,' expansion by 'cultural symbiosis' and the assumption of cultural leadership, are discussed. Anthropologists may not agree with some of the evidence of racial and cultural affinity Haushofer adduces (he speaks often of the Malayo-Mongolian racial group and of the Malayo-Polynesian), but there can be little doubt that he offers a feasible plan of bloodless expansion to the Japanese.

So far as Australia is concerned, her 'expansion shows a Janus-face: the after effects of the former fringe colonization by a sea-faring people and an expansion along the fringe, and then alongside this the increasing pressure of the continental mass, the great unpopulated tracts within.' There is a fundamental dualism in Australia's geopolitical outlook arising from the clash between oceanic and continental modes of thought. While sharing in the general Pacific tendency to retreat within her own boundaries, to concentrate all her attention on the development of her own continental space, Australia feels that the sparsity of population in that space is itself an invitation to the over-populated nations to the north and therefore interests herself in the fringe of islands off the northern coast. Australia's optimum population is given as 140 millions, of which 30 millions could be accommodated in tropical Australia; the disparity between these figures and the actual population causes considerable misgiving: 'with all their confidence of being self-sufficient the Australians have nevertheless an uncomfortable feeling that

"we've coloured the country red on the map, but then left it empty."

Haushofer points out that it was Australia which, of all the British countries, was most concerned by Germany's appearance in the Pacific and that Australia fought hard at Versailles for control of the nearest German possessions. 'The decisive factor' in Australian geopolitical development

will be whether in Australia a rejuvenation and renewal of the British race has taken place or whether there has only been the grafting of a branch suffering from the same troubles as the Motherland: flight from the land, depopulation of the agricultural districts, over-population of the industrialized areas with urban degeneration—all diseases of the Anglo-Saxon race at home. In this case Asia would stand threateningly at the doors.

Australia and New Zealand stand in much the same continental-oceanic relation to each other as do China and Japan, and it is a sign of geopolitical sagacity that they are prepared to act in concert in Pacific matters.

The United States is regarded with suspicion. There is always the likelihood that it may try to introduce 'Atlantic' methods of power politics and of imperialism into the Pacific. American expansion into the Pacific islands is regarded as a hypocritical seeking for power, the history of the settlement of the United States shows that the Americans have an excellent geopolitical feeling for space, and the technical advances of recent decades in transport all suggest that further expansion is likely. Although there is a return to the policy of compromise under Franklin Roosevelt from the imperialist policy that brought about the Spanish-American War, 'from behind the air barriers of the Aleutians, Hawaii and Tutuila the fleets and air squadrons can at any time break out again.' But the United States has tremendous power in its natural resources, in its continental spaces, and in its control of one of the most important waterways of the world—the Panama Canal. It has the geopolitical opportunity of 'organizing' the whole American living-space under the guise of Pan-America, and Haushofer points to the development of coastwise, longitudinal roads, railways and airways as one of the first steps towards this end. With such a rich 'heartland' and such continental space behind it, with such associate states as those of the South American area, the United States will probably be enticed by the attraction of space into the northern Pacific (consider, for instance, the proposal to build a railway from the United States through Canada and Alaska across the narrow Bering gap to north-eastern Asia, a grandiose project that must appeal to the space-loving



Americans), and into the south-west Pacific where there will ultimately be a struggle with Japan for the possession of the rich islands and peninsulas of the declining British-Dutch-French empires. Haushofer sees developing already three major living-spaces in the Pacific: the East and South-east Asian under the control of Japan, the Pan-American under the control of the United States, and perhaps the Australasian; ultimately there may be a clash between Japan and the United States for the hegemony of the Pacific, but one suspects that Haushofer would prefer to see the question settled by the characteristic Pacific method of compromise. One wonders if that is because he is not sure of the superiority of Japanese resources.

Only a few of Haushofer's judgments have been given here and very little impression of the amazing wealth of illustration and information that he uses to support them. This is one of the few books that must be read in entirety before its full flavour is apparent. Discursive, seemingly unorganized, it relies on reiteration, example piled on example, and the startling juxtaposition of commonly unrelated facts, for its effects. It is founded on a vast collection of material from scientific and popular publications in all languages; considering the width of the fields covered there is an extraordinarily accurate interpretation of alien cultures and historical movements. To make a point, of course, Haushofer does not flinch from a little polite exaggeration; Griffith Taylor, quoted in support of one of the author's arguments, is called 'the leading geopolitician of the Pacific and practical founder of the Australian capital'; in discussing the Pacific's tendency to evolve a common outlook, the Pan-Pacific Science Congresses are confused with the conferences of the Institute of Pacific Relations.

But these are small points. Haushofer's geopolitics has already been influential in the councils of the Axis powers; he has demonstrated that there is here a field which has not been studied systematically by Anglo-Saxons; he has also demonstrated that it is a field well worth study. It should be emphasized again that Haushofer does not try to give a detailed programme for political or strategic action; he is concerned to make clear the geographic and political environment within which action may take place, and with setting out the 'laws' which govern the growth and decay of states. From the quotations given above it may be felt that there is nothing very new in geopolitics; that other writers before and since, as for instance Bienstock in his *Struggle for the Pacific*, have dealt with the same material in both a clearer and more pro-

found manner. But what is new in Haushofer is the philosophy that lies behind his analyses and judgments, the attempt to produce a rationalization of the apparently unorganized facts of geopolitics and to adduce 'laws' and 'processes' that have at least some degree of universal validity. It is hoped that this review has indicated both by its comments on Haushofer's work and by the quotations that the laws and processes are, curiously enough, such as fit in most satisfyingly with the geopolitical ambitions of a nation in Germany's imperial, economic and geographic situation. Whether or not there is a 'science' of geopolitics in the Haushoferian sense, it is certain that Australians as a whole have not given the study they deserve to the facts of Pacific geopolitics; the present struggle has caught us ill-equipped with information and policies relating to the Pacific places and peoples with whom we have to deal and it is urgent that Australia should remedy this deficiency to prepare herself for the part she should play in the peace.

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#### SHORTER NOTICES

We have received copies of the first numbers of two new publications, both of which owe much to the stimulus given by the war to Pacific interests and both of which will demand attention from those endeavouring to understand and interpret Australia and New Zealand in their oceanic setting. The first issue of *The Inter-American Monthly* appeared in April 1942, and absorbs both the *Inter-American Quarterly* and *Pan-American News* (formerly issued by The Foreign Policy Association of New York). The editor is J. I. B. McCulloch, 1200 National Press Building, Washington, D.C. and the annual subscription is \$3.00. The monthly aims to survey Latin-American developments, whether political, cultural or economic, and most of the articles published to date provide brief, but useful historical introductions.

*The Russian Review*, an American journal 'devoted to Russia past and present' (ed. W. H. Chamberlin, 215 West 23rd Street, New York City, published semi-annually, subscription \$2.50 per annum), made its first appearance in November 1941. It promises to be exceptionally strong in its review pages and bibliographical surveys and, in so far as it brings to notice materials concerning Russian policy and expansion in Siberia and southern Asia, it will be a boon to students of Pacific affairs. The opening article claims attention in this context. 'Prostor: A Geopolitical Study of Russia and the United States,' by Roger Dow of the history department at Harvard College, compares and contrasts the expansion of Russia eastwards across Siberia and of the United States westwards across the prairies and the Rockies. In its discussions of the phenomena of frontier society, it forms an admirable supplement and commentary to P. Bizilli's 'Geopolitical Conditions of the Evolution of Russian Nationality' (*Journal of Modern History*, March 1930) and it also provides a most stimulating challenge to the conventional 'legislative' approach that still dominates the study of Australian land settlement and the fitful penetration inland from the southern and eastern coasts.

G.F.J.



## SOME PHILOSOPHIES OF HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

**D**URING a mild altercation I once had with a very eminent professor in London, I was informed that the philosophy of history, in which I had declared some interest, was 'sheer drivel.' For the moment I was brought up with a round turn; for at that stage I venerated the eminent. Later I found it a useful exercise to put this desolating remark itself into a historical framework, to determine how far it was indicative of one attitude—itself historically conditioned—towards history as a subject of study. It expresses admirably, I think, the culmination of a doctrine which grew up in the latter part of the nineteenth century; it is indeed in one sense the fine flower of the nineteenth century's study of history. For in that time, fit preparation for our own, did men canonise history as 'research.' All historical conclusions, they argued, must be formulated on a basis of scientific method; and before we have discovered, using that method, all the facts of history, it is idle to build up philosophies of history. Let the philosopher philosophise, if he must; but let the historian be quite clear that it has nothing to do with him. Did not Fichte once remark that the philosopher 'follows the *a priori* thread of the world-plan which is clear to him without any history; and if he makes use of history, it is not to prove anything, since his theses are already proved independently of all history?' Precisely: but what has the historian to do with *a priori*? He follows not that drab; his job is a single, a rigid, a virginal devotion to the Fact.

One of the more regrettable results of this attitude, as Professor Trevelyan long ago pointed out,<sup>2</sup> was that polite society ceased to read history—though it continued to absorb the memoirs of the great or the scandalous, and the warmed-up romances of the lady's magazine. At best, the noble banquet of a Gibbon was succeeded in our day by the delicate contrivances of Mr. Strachey's kitchen, by the Guedallan milk-bar. For the ordinary man Clio was no longer a Muse but an amusement; for the professional student of history she was but a sexless and stony monster. Regrettable certainly in the short term all this may be. But it is doubtful if it matters in the long run. The study of history is bound to have its phases, and the

1. These very summary and inadequately documented reflections were in the first place delivered as a lecture, and their sole virtue may be that they helped me to get my own scattered reading and thinking into some sort of order. They are to be taken only as notes, with gaps many and large. I have not mentioned Toynbee's *Study of History*, for example, or Herbert Spencer, or St. Thomas Aquinas, or Thucydides, or Dr. Alfred Rosenberg. They may perhaps be laid in good faith before the reader, but with the excellent commercial tag attached, 'E. & O. E.'—'Errors and Omissions Excepted.'

2. See his *Clio, a Muse* (1st ed., London, 1913) and, for the other side of the perhaps no longer very exciting argument, Professor J. B. Bury's famous inaugural lecture, 'The Science of History' (1903), reprinted in his *Selected Essays* (Cambridge, 1930).

search for facts, the refusal prematurely to synthesize and interpret facts, must always have a supreme value; more particularly as the facts of history are of their very nature shifting and illusory things. It is for the historian, stretching all his faculties, to give them solidity, to pin them down, to see and describe them in all their relations. A multitude of men have contributed to this end, and few have been so mean as to deserve utter contempt. Let us continue to hurl crude lumps of fact against the airy palaces of abstraction.

On the other hand—and this has been often pointed out—the modern researcher is apt to lose something of value, beside a good prose style, as he keeps on his secluded and exclusive course. He may become the greatest living authority on this or that; he may have cultivated the fact with ascetic and unwearied ardour; but the fact, once so vital and exciting to someone, remains unexciting, bloodless, dead, because unrelated. To discover its parents is difficult; and certainly it has no progeny. Is it daughter of the document, fathered by the footnote? But that at best is but a manufactured relationship, lacking real tenderness; cold, it is not organic. Change our metaphor: we do not merely want to see a wood as well as trees; we want to see the wood in its place in the world. That is, if we are going to make sense of history, we need to co-ordinate our special facts—our researcher's facts—with as many other facts as possible, and to see them all in some sort of universal context. Such a context can hardly be static—it must have some sort of movement, for the very essence of history is that it continuously 'happens.' Taking this universal context, furthermore, we may generalize further—we may conclude that the continuous 'happening' process goes on according to some intelligible system or 'law.' Living in the twentieth century, indeed, we may find it hard not to come to some such conclusion as this; for we in our time almost instinctively look for general causes and general effects. We may, in fact, without thinking in terms of philosophy at all, find ourselves landed in a philosophy of history. Let me indeed, before going further, define my term, and say that I take 'philosophy' in a general sense to include all attempts at a broad and systematic interpretation of history. It may be added that the refusal or the inability to see any general laws at all, the one-damn-thing-after-another view of history<sup>3</sup> is itself a philosophy of history. Mr. Henry Ford's celebrated aphorism, 'History is bunk,' is also a philosophy of history.

But this compulsion to generalize has not been confined to the twentieth century. Men have always been interested in the large

3. See Sir Charles Oman's statement of this viewpoint, with all the genial savagery of the finely-crusted Tory, in his *On the Writing of History* (London, 1939), and the more polite despair of H. A. L. Fisher, *A History of Europe* (London, 1935), i. p. vii.



question where they have come from and how they arrived and where they are going. Sometimes the question has been driven home to them with more than ordinary vividness by some outside event, some widespread calamity—the fall of Rome or a revolution or one of the great wars. The question was solved for some thousands of years by theology, of which history was a branch. Human life as a whole, that is, was regarded primarily from the theological (and also philosophical) standpoint, and when history had recounted, for instance, the adventures of Adam and Eve and of the Roman Empire as an instrument of God's hand it could retire satisfied. But theology is now itself a branch of history; the historian has widened and lengthened his view; he includes in his history not merely theology but philosophy, and philosophies of history; and the satisfactory philosophy of history must account for this. Such an accounting, if successful, will be founded on the massive discoveries of fact which we owe to the research student, to the Gardiner of the Civil War, for instance, the Marx and Engels of the capitalist industrial system, the Osgood and Andrews of the American colonial period; let me add to their hundreds of more obscure disciples. Meanwhile, we may consider what men have so far done by way of philosophizing; premising that they have always professed to proceed on a strict regard for the fact.

Are there then any *general types* of explanation, theory, or philosophy, which we can take as representative? Is there any of these which will liberalize and enrich, without distorting, the bare and sacred fact? If they change, does the change take place in a way to be rationally explained? Does history make sense? Can philosophies of history, that is, be interpreted historically? If history is merely a fortuitous record of the crimes and follies of mankind, is it any use to try to impose an order on it? There is our first point: if history merely *is* that record and nothing more, obviously to weave a metaphysical web or to look for material laws is an expense of time as wasteful as it is comfortless.

The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually; and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be. . . .

Vanity of vanities . . . vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

So thought a man of obviously sensitive intelligence; but it is interesting to reflect how singular is that cool and magically-modulated

pessimism in the collection of books where it finds utterance. Men, that is, have either wilfully imposed an order on the troubles and jubilations of their lives and history, or from study of part of that history, have professed to see an order of some sort in it. They have done this in a bewildering variety of ways, but it seems to me that there are five main types of interpretation involved, which I classify very roughly as the theological, the classical, the romantic, the intellectualist, and the materialist. The classification may not be a particularly good one, but at least it gives us a fairly useful starting point.

### *The Theological View*

I take first the theological view, and go to what is for us the fountain-head, that chief historical monument the Hebrew scriptures. I do not know that a philosophy of history is ever there explicitly stated, but the thing stares one in the face—the divine ordination of the world and its fortunes, the particular adventures of a Chosen People. God is in history, ordering history about, as it were, from the first to the last word of time. ‘God created the heaven and the earth.’ ‘And God said . . .’ ‘Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she is removed.’ ‘The Lord hath commanded . . .’ ‘Come behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.’ ‘For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.’ It comes to a philosophy of history—though certainly you may regard it as primarily a theology, partly a national theory. But many national theories have this peculiar trend towards divine ordination. We can perhaps call it the nordic theory of antiquity: and its affiliations with contemporary notions are obvious. There is a point where it becomes sheer drivel indeed.

The theological view did not always go so directly to the point as with the Hebrews. It was active in something of the same way with practical men like Cromwell, who worked out his own personal doctrine of ‘Providences,’ of God making known his will in the events of contemporary history, showing the tortured mind of the would-be constitutionalist what step towards dictatorship to take next. Surely, too, the evident will of God could be made the basis of a foreign policy! In a vaguer way, it was present in the belief (if it was a belief) of Milton, that when God had some particularly important work to do, he looked round for an Englishman. It appears to have formed the background to the politics of more than one colonial statesman; it has burst out with crude vigour in the recently



reinvigorated doctrine of the British Israelites. The modern man of ordinary intellect may deem that farce, but the theory has a larger significance as long as people believe in the existence behind the universe of a directing God. To the sincere Christian, there can be only one valid explanation of history. St. Augustine settled the historical outlook of the whole medieval time; and as, for him, the entire stretch of human affairs is subordinate to the tremendous drama of eternity, with the far-stretched might of Rome as the agent of God in the punishment of Original Sin (for through the deed of Adam did human government, the power of kings and magistrates, come into the world)—so were later generations controlled by the close and merciless logic of Calvin. The doctrine of Providence, developed in Augustine's *City of God*, took on what could be the deep and mortal horror (but so curiously often wasn't) of Predestination. One way or the other history became in essence the pre-ordained story of the eternal salvation of the few and the eternal damnation of the many. And the notion of Providence retained its enormous force for many hundred years. In modern times it appears at its greatest and most majestic, probably, in the *Universal History* of the seventeenth-century Bossuet; it gives sweep and stature and dignity to the most outrageous prejudices of Burke—for is not his British constitution, that thing of corrupt and oligarchic aggrandizement, pretty much to its last detail the child of a Providence that here put forth its most sanctified efforts? In so many words, is not all history 'the known march of the ordinary providence of God'—including, certainly the Whig settlement of 1688?

But great and influential as the theory was, it could not withstand the facts of eighteenth century social life, the wit of Voltaire, the sapping of the liberal intellectual movement. The God of the deists had long ago removed his hand from the machinery of the universe; he watched, perhaps, in a spirit of detached irony, but he did not interfere. When God was next enlisted it was by the revolutionaries, and Mazzini's theory of the providential and peculiar mission of each national grouping of humanity is more interesting than convincing. The doctrine of Providence in all its breadth and scope certainly had influence on the theorists of progress; but I presume that, as an intellectually tenable hypothesis it is now dead.<sup>4</sup>

### *The Classical Theory*

Secondly, there is that type of theory I have called classical: the theory of cyclic repetition beneath an overhanging *Moirai* or fate, or

4. My Catholic friends tell me that this statement is absurd.

universal law.<sup>5</sup> This particular Greek theory of cycles I do not think attracts any philosopher to-day, and certainly no historian is concerned over it. The general theory of cyclic change, of course, still attracts the philosophic mind from time to time. But the Greek theory is a different matter from our modern variants; for as a philosophy of history it managed to exist without any history at all, in the broad sense—the Greeks, though they had great historians, had very little history to look back upon. If we can take Plato as on the whole representative of Greek thought, then, it seems, the world is created by the Deity in perfection, and remains relatively perfect for the first half of a vast period of 72,000 solar years—the Golden Age which has always made idealists so homesick; but then sets in a second 36,000 years of deterioration, at the end of which the Deity takes hold again and the whole process begins anew, and so repetitively through infinite time. As Shelley puts it

Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam  
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

Now each cycle is an exact repetition of all the others: we exist, have existed, and shall exist; we do not know in what cycle we exist. the Persian ships will always sink at Salamis, Socrates has drunk the hemlock before and will take the same bitter draught again; the oracle will never speak save with ambiguity; the Acropolis will blossom again in marble and Athens will eternally betray herself. But the Greek, being human, could never reconcile himself with equanimity to change. Change for him was always change for the worse; political innovation, however desirable it might seem to interested parties, was always in the long run to be deplored, for inevitably it led on to chaos. Hence the desire for stability, that desire which drove Plato and Aristotle, though fully aware of the inevitable, so closely to analyze in their political theories the conditions of its delay, the evils which finally made delay vain. The end of all empire was decline and fall; that was implicit in the law which was to the thoughtful Greek the overmastering condition of life. Nothing could be further removed from our modern conception than the law which the Greek conceived to animate—rather than regulate—his state. What political martyr to-day could die as Socrates died—escape was open to him, remember—flinging away his life lest the Laws should be flouted, and he himself be false, not to a fortuitous legal rule, but to something in the inmost spirit of Athens? Law is

5. I have omitted in this section to consider the Orphic theory that individual men, through a process of suffering and purgation, might in time escape from the 'wheel' and be reunited with the Godhead whence they came; because that strikes me as more narrowly theology, or theodicy, than as part of a philosophy of history.



there made specific, accepted at the crisis of an individual's life; but the same law, in a broader sense, seemed to the Greek equally compelling. Over the universe brooded a fixed order; men could but submit, with pessimism and with dignity. So the Greek historian will write: 'Evil had to befall Candaules, and so, not long afterwards . . .'; or 'Evil had to befall Artaynte and all her house, and accordingly she replied to Xerxes . . .'; or 'Naxos was not to be destroyed by this expedition, and therefore the following incident occurred . . .'

A subordinate part of this law is perhaps the place the Greeks gave to what they called the Envy of the Gods, and to Fortune—an idea that had so much later attraction for the men of the Renaissance. Was not history full of men who had aspired too high, and been smitten? 'God suffers no one to be proud but himself,' said Artabanus to Xerxes. Was that not in truth the fate of Athens? And as for Fortune: 'I have watched the workings of Fortune,' concluded Polybius, 'I know her genius for envious dealing with mankind; and I also know that her empire is most absolute over just those oases in human life in which the victim fancies his sojourn to be most delectable and most secure.'<sup>6</sup> There you have not only Greek history, but Greek philosophy, Greek drama, the Greek sense of life. It does not, I think, satisfy the modern man.

### *The Romantic View*

But no more is the modern, or anyhow the twentieth century, man, satisfied with the romantic view of history; which of all theories least deserves the name of philosophy, and over which therefore I spend little time. Certainly I should have dwelt on it much longer if I were discussing history either as literature or as research; for some of the most impressive achievements of the nineteenth century historian, however soundly based on the documents, however well designed and articulated, have fundamentally this romantic disposition. Consider, among writers in English, Macaulay, Froude, Carlyle, Seeley. History to them is a tale that is told. It is a very exciting, a very important tale; it may teach grave lessons, announce excellent conclusions. It may prove the rectitude of the Whig party, readjust the reputation of Henry VIII, defend the Church of England as by law established; it may hang historic movement on the triumphs and agonies of great men, or it may exalt the destinies of imperial Britain. But (to repeat) whatever trials the writers may have gone through—and heaven

6. On the Greek attitude, the reader will find a useful compendium in Arnold J. Toynbee's *Greek Historical Thought* (London, 1924).

knows that Carlyle, for instance, went through enough—with whatever mastery they used their sources, and however successful they were in creating an atmosphere or constructing a narrative—they do not pierce to the heart of things. They give colour, life, warmth, movement, controversy, illusion. They do not (with the doubtful exception of Carlyle) give us a philosophy of history; they offer us an interpretation of a *phase* of history. With them the narrative was the thing. Macaulay realized his ambition—his first volume duly displaced the latest popular novel on the boudoir table of the young lady of fashion. But is that enough? To one plunged into the historical ideas of the twentieth century the great Victorians seem great, certainly, in their particular lines, but—I risk the word—superficial. And when Froude proceeded to explode the claims of the scientific historians of the 'fifties he may have done so, but he also exploded any claim of his own to be a great historical thinker. He did it in the name of psychological truth; but then psychology, like history, has moved since Froude. Romanticism leaves too much to chance.<sup>7</sup>

### *The Idea of Progress*

I now come to that theory, or assumption, or belief, or idea, which underlies both of the last types of historical philosophy I mean to consider. This is the idea of progress. Of it, all the characteristic modern theories of history are subdivisions, whether they are intellectualist or materialist. Here I cannot analyse its history at length. Nevertheless, something must be said; for though the expression of scepticism about progress was a chief intellectual exercise of the middle classes of the west after the last war<sup>8</sup> the discussion seems to have died down of recent years.

The idea first became really familiar in the eighteenth century, when for the cultivated mind it overthrew the doctrine of Providence. It was obviously impossible for the Greeks, for it was alien alike to their general thought and to what has been called their instinctive pessimism. It was impossible, equally obviously, for the medieval mind. The Greek philosophy was a doctrine of the fall of man, but at the end of it there was no redemption; and the supernatural nature of the Christian redemptive scheme left no room for the slow infinitude of progress. It took two conditions to make progress a possible hypothesis of historical change: first,

7. J. A. Froude, 'The Science of History,' in *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, vol. i (1867). Froude's lecture was mainly aimed at Buckle.

8. Cf. the dates of Bury's *Idea of Progress* (1920), Spengler's *Decline of the West* (1918, though drafted earlier), Dean Inge's *Idea of Progress* (1920). The contemporary articles in periodicals are innumerable.



Renaissance humanism, the placing of man in the centre of man's attention, classical secularism plus sixteenth century individualism; secondly, the tremendous achievements of the seventeenth century in scientific discovery and the devotion to reason of which Descartes was the apostle. The conclusion was forced that man's history was not merely a sub-plot in the drama of eternity, but something exclusively of this world; it was implied that all phenomena, including that history, were regulated by uniform and undisturbed laws which might be scientifically approached and rationally apprehended. God could no longer be allowed to interfere, for that would be getting in the way of the machinery. Providence and Progress could not live together, and in the Age of Reason it was obvious which one would have to go. Even when an affection for Providence survived, has not the object of the affection somewhat changed? Burke's 'known march of the ordinary providence of God' is something different from Cromwell's 'Providences.' Has not Burke himself been infected with the idea of universal law? Could anybody in that generation, Christian or infidel, escape the infection?

Now the idea having been brought forth, we can see why it should have become so influential. Scientific advance, and in particular the growing triumphs of applied science; the leading scientific idea of evolution, active in its general form long before Darwin; the vogue of rationalist and liberal philosophy; the complex comforts of European civilization contrasted with the unvarnished facts of new anthropological knowledge (though the facts were often varnished, for the special purpose of social criticism); the tremendous nineteenth century advance in material ease and wealth, the improvement of trade-routes, education, and plumbing; the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution; the pleasures of democracy and the intoxication of imperialism; Rhodes subduing Africa and Bleriot flying the Channel and Marconi rescuing a ship in mid-Atlantic—here were historical phenomena striking to the most elementary intelligence. Everything seemed improving, and the good middle-class Liberal could hardly help feeling pleased with humanity. It remained only to carry on the great work with sufficient disrespect for our ancestors, and we should have Mr. Wells, for ever young and eager, standing upon earth as upon a footstool, and stretching out his realm amidst the stars. It was all very gratifying; but the question which posed itself to the philosophical historian was: how did it all happen? What lay behind progress? What was its driving-force? Was it directly or indirectly the result of man's efforts? What explanation in its sweep and majesty would

most persuasively match the majestic theme? The explanations, I think, are broadly divisible into the intellectualist and the materialist. Neither is necessarily completely exclusive of the other.

*'Mind' or 'The Spirit'*

In the intellectualist type I include all those 'spiritual' or metaphysical interpretations of history which are so attractive to the thinker who relucts at belief in the ultimate reality of natural phenomena, or who merely has a refined distaste for dead matter (if I may use the phrase) or ordinary brutal humanity as something rather vulgar. That is, I lump the snobs in with the philosophical idealists, and both with the old-fashioned rationalists and some new-fashioned psychologists. It makes a rather shocking assortment, but there is the common factor of emphasis on 'mind' or 'the spirit' as the leading motif in historical change. On the metaphysical side it is a type of theory which has caused the historian much pain, and has convinced him of the unreliable character of philosophers' minds. For most philosophers seem to have been impelled to compose a philosophy of history, whether they have known anything about history or not, as they have composed a philosophy of aesthetics, however deplorable their taste in pictures. I have already quoted Fichte's proud boast. That, however, is apart from the main thread I am following.

What, then, to return to our question, is the impulse at the heart of progress, of historical evolution? On the intellectualist side we may take the answers given first by the eighteenth century rationalists and by such nineteenth century thinkers as Comte and Mill; an interesting quite recent psychological theory which has not yet been thoroughly canvassed; and the metaphysical system of Hegel. On the materialist side, of course, the supreme figure is Marx.

The eighteenth century was notable for an immense extension of the scope of history. If progress was a fact, it must be evident in every branch of life; it must have contributory elements other than politics and religion. There was, for instance, geography and climate—a suggestion which had been made frequently enough before, but which now gained much wider currency. Laws, morals, manners, letters, social arrangements—all these things were now to be considered; and the wide and various erudition of the Italian Vico or the French Montesquieu, the brilliance and perspective of Voltaire, comparative analysis and a new sense of proportion created what we know as social science and the history of civilization. Now the factor which had first made the idea of progress explicit was Descartes' enlargement of the role of reason; and when progress



was extended from scientific thought to social change, the guiding principle of reason inevitably went with it. In the human mind, says Vico, is to be found the explanation of the history of human societies, with their savage, heroic, and civilized ages. The civilization of which Voltaire wrote the history was a civilization to which *l'esprit des hommes*, the mind of man, was the index; behind social and political change, he held, were changes of opinion. True, he allowed a large part to chance, and he could flippantly remark that history was nothing but 'a parcel of tricks we play on the dead.' But most historians have had that feeling at times. For Voltaire and his fellows human reason had striven deliberately, overthrowing superstition and prejudice; for his contemporary Turgot, on the other hand, humanity could not help advancing, blind though it might be. (There is an interesting analogy here, by the way, with divergent schools of socialism—the quarrelling followers of Marx who declared the inevitability of the proletarian triumph, on the one hand, and the urgency of personal struggle and sacrifice, on the other.) The general conception was carried into the nineteenth century to its clearest and most circumstantial expression by John Stuart Mill in England and Comte in France. Mill says, in his *System of Logic*:

'In the difficult process of observation and comparison which is here required it would evidently be of great assistance if it should happen to be the fact that some one element in the complex existence of social man is pre-eminent above all others as the prime agent of the social movement . . . Now, the evidence of history and that of human nature combine, by a striking instance of coincidence, to show that there really is one social element which is thus predominant among the agents of the social progression. This is the state of the speculative faculties of mankind . . . As between any given state of speculation and the correlative state of everything else, it was almost always the former which first showed itself, though the effects no doubt reacted potently upon the cause. Every considerable advance in material civilization has been preceded by an advance in knowledge . . .'

Well, then, was the development of thought subject to any ascertainable system? Can we get hold of 'the law of the successive transformation of human opinions'? I do not think Mill ever got hold of it; for he could not bring himself to share Comte's own faith in Comte's famous 'Law of the Three Stages.' Comte, as a good mathematical Frenchman, with intellectual roots in the eighteenth century and some general knowledge of science, was equally convinced that the history of man was the history of man's reason; and this brought him to his so-called law—a law in which he had been anticipated by Turgot, but which Turgot had never worked out in detail. The three stages of intellectual evolution, theological, metaphysical and scientific or 'positive,' have each been

reflected in the external phenomena of history, and have each had much of value to contribute to general historical evolution—to progress, in short. But what stuck in Mill's gorge was Comte's proposal to stop the process in the immediate future, virtually to bring progress to an end, and arrange the world in a number of positivist co-operative states, run on principles which have some resemblance to the fascist ideal of to-day. It stuck in the gorges of a good many other people besides Mill.

A subtler view, but one not made entirely convincing, is that sketched by Gerald Heard in his *Ascent of Humanity* (1929)—an essay, to quote its sub-title, on 'the evolution of civilization from group-consciousness through individuality to super-consciousness.' The key-word is *individuality*. The moving-force of history, argues Heard, is neither economic nor political, nor so relatively simple an exercise of human reason on its environment as the French *philosophes* or Comte or Mill envisaged; nor is progress a matter of movement in a straight line—a continuous ascent, as it were. It returns on itself, but never to the beginning; each start has gained something over the previous start; it is spiral, not cyclic. And the moving-force is the realization in more and more men of their own individuality and its claims. A society must either give this individuality scope for self-expression, or efficiently side-track it. In the Middle Ages it was side-tracked into monasticism, but that could not last; and the whole of modern history is the result of a rapidly increasing individuality always bursting its bonds, through the Reformation, the rise of capitalism, democracy, and so on. But unregulated individuality can end only in chaos; and the salvation of our present society, according to Heard, depends on the lifting of our consciousness of self on to a new plane, a plane where the best gifts of individuality will be fused with the instinctive common consciousness which was the precursor of individuality—which he sees, for instance, as the essential social characteristic of some savage peoples yet untouched by the exploitation of the west. In the common possession of an impersonal science and in some of the results of psychical research Heard sees some hope for our success; if we fail, as men have failed hitherto, the struggle must begin over again. The book makes points that are important; from time to time, also, it makes concessions to the economic interpretation which if elaborated might prove fatal.

From psychology let us turn back to metaphysics—to the greatest of the metaphysicians who applied his mind to the problem of



historical explanation. Hegel might quite well have made a great historian; his discussions of men and events show a sense of reality and character rare among thinkers of any sort. As it is, he remains apparently the most abstruse of philosophers, and one who is not a philosopher can only approach him with trepidation. He had none of the crystal clarity of the French eighteenth century thinkers, who must in their well-meaning and hopeful zeal have seemed deplorable sciolists to him. His background was not merely Aristotle, but Spinoza and Kant and Fichte; and he is correspondingly profound. Like a good deal of German beer, Hegel's doctrine is dark and sits heavy on the soul. Its leading characteristics may for our purpose be thus briefly and crudely summed up; behind the world and all its phenomena, and therefore its history, is something that cannot be translated into English—pure abstract intelligence, universal spirit, the Idea, the Absolute. This expresses itself in the world as *will*, eternal, self-conscious, self-determining, essentially free and realizing itself in freedom. It is also rational and is the only true reality. But this Idea has not *fully* realized itself in the world of events at any particular time. The Hegelian metaphysic is a metaphysic of 'becoming'—history is a process of 'becoming'; and here we are round to our old friend progress again—progress, at least, up to a point. The whole course of history is an unfolding of Universal Spirit, the Absolute manifesting itself in social relations and in politics; and the stage of political culture which any particular people has reached at any particular time is a stage in this unfolding, this manifestation. It is therefore, to use mundane language, historically justifiable, and we can see what a powerful support is here lent to political or economic conservatism. A paradox appears—for is not the unfolding of the spirit, the manifestation of the Absolute, also the willing, the realization of the idea of freedom? Indeed, says Hegel, world-history displays four great political systems—the Oriental, the Greek, the Roman, the German; in all of these successively has the idea of freedom been more perfectly realized. 'The Orient knew and to the present day knows only that *One* is free; the Greek and Roman world, that *Some* are free; the German world knows that *All* are free.' We may recollect here that Hegel died in 1831, and cast our minds back to the state of German freedom in that year. Two things also should be noted, however: that granting the working of the Absolute, there is no reason why it should not keep on realizing freedom after 1831—and that is what it has been doing according to neo-Hegelians like Croce, who also has a philosophy of history and a philosophy of the Spirit; and secondly, that apart from the Absolute, in the growth

of freedom has seemed to more than one eminent historian to reside the grand strategy of history.

Now apart from all this, the important thing about Hegel is the method by which Universal Spirit went about its business. It worked through the process of 'dialectic'; which was a method of logic, or mind, and therefore a process reflected in history. The phenomena of the universe were in the continuous state of 'becoming,' through the struggle of contradictory elements and their resolutions, which were forthwith plunged into a fresh struggle with a further contradictory element. 'Thesis' clashed with 'anti-thesis'; the result was a 'synthesis' with the elements of both, but different from either. This happened in the realm of ideas; it was a process of logic; it was reflected in the realm of the visible world. To take a very simple illustration of the reflection: King John quarrelled with the barons; the result was Magna Carta—or monarchy limited by feudal aristocracy. Each historical stage holds within itself the growing seeds of the next historical stage. But note this: struggle was as important as growth. 'Where . . .,' says Hegel, 'the power to develop the contradiction and bring it to a head is lacking, the thing or the being is shattered on the contradiction.' Hegel died, but Marx lived. He took the dialectical process; he was impressed, as few men have been, with thesis, antithesis and synthesis; and class conflict became a philosophy.

### *Historical Materialism*

Before I discuss, very briefly, the intent of historical materialism, let us pause to see how far one of our earlier questions can be answered; let us summarise the historical connection, if there is any, between our philosophies. There is, I think, a continuous connection, though some of the links are not perhaps obvious. Certainly, for example, the Original Sin and Redemption of the Middle Ages do not happily march with Montesquieu and Voltaire. But at least the Greeks put man and not God in the centre of the workings of history, at least the men of the medieval church did in some sort carry on the Greco-Roman, Stoic idea of universality when thinking of other men. They conceived a universal order, and the conception was never lost. Now the sixteenth and seventeenth century revival of Greek humanism—the anthropocentric attitude—and of free enquiry issued in the proud Renaissance defiance of authority; the Cartesian principles followed, of immutable law and the supremacy of reason, with the resulting belief in intellectual and general progress of the eighteenth century; and without the precedent idea of



progress, so strongly developed later in the purely rationalist mode by Mill and Comte, Hegel might look nostalgically back to Hellas, but could hardly have produced his theory of evolution by dialectic. That, together with the wrongs of Westphalian peasants and the factory system, gives us Marx and the economic interpretation of history—or historical materialism, to confer upon it its more comprehensive and intellectualized name. One almost notes, across the mists of two millennia, Stalin touching hands with Socrates.

One thing follows, which may seem rather surprising, in the case of a man who has been the subject of a greater number of impassioned diatribes on the part of posterity than, I suppose, any other nineteenth century figure. Marx stood in the centre of the stream of European thought. He understood its full range, he absorbed it, and he gave it the whole impression of his acute and vigorous individual genius. It might be wrong, according to his own principles, to say that without him the world to-day would be a different place; but I think we can truthfully assert that but for him the world's self-consciousness would be a much vaguer, even more tortured thing. At least we can define in some detail our disease, we can trace its progress with some historical clarity.

Most historians agree over the fundamental importance of economic factors in history. They do not agree that the Marxian explanation of the great historical changes can be invariably just; but it is important in this respect to observe that, as Marx said, he was never a Marxist. It was the various schools of his disciples, flourishing on internecine feuds, that pushed his central conviction to absurd lengths of all-inclusive precision. Marx (both he and Engels afterwards bore witness to this) at first over-emphasized the weight of the economic factor in the superstructure of social life; but the over-emphasis was that of men struggling to make their voices heard above a very confused and exasperating din. What, then, were the essentials that Marx was driving at? There are two points to be clear about: (a) the place of the economic factor in determining the social contours of any epoch and (b) the method by which those contours are forced or moulded into others—what the nineteenth century loved to call social statics and social dynamics; what we may call the general aspect of a particular society at any particular time, and the reason why the society changes into something different.

(a) Now the great gift of the eighteenth century—of Montesquieu and Vico particularly—to subsequent thought was their realization that history is not merely politics; that any society,

according to the stage of development it has reached, will show certain characteristic relations between all its institutions and will look at them in a characteristic way. Feudal Europe will have a certain political organization, a certain religious belief, a certain architecture; and modern Europe will not have a modern political organization and a modern architecture and a feudal religious belief, any more than it will have Roman predial slavery or the Chinese penal system. What, then, is fundamental in society? The place allowed to reason, answered the French *philosophes*; the general state of the speculative faculties, said Mill; the stage reached in the mind, said Comte; the degree to which the Absolute has freely willed itself, said Hegel; politics, assumed most of the practising historians, or possibly back-stairs politics; chance, religion, geography, race, national character, chorused a thousand voices—how particularly satisfactory that mouth-filling phrase 'national character,' British, French, German, Ruritanian! The prevailing system of economic production and distribution, said Marx; the prime necessity of men is not to worship or paint pictures or play variations on the theme of party government or even to compose philosophies of history, but to get a living. The way men get their living conditions the remainder of their life. That is elementary, final, inescapable. On this foundation all else is built up, political institutions, religious institutions, war, art, social stratification and intercourse, the allowed limits of learning, the criteria of good and bad taste. However far poetry or philosophy or speculation may wing its flight, this is always its point of departure, to this point it is bound with an invisible chain—or a chain not always invisible. The heart of Greek economics was slavery—the Greeks produced one civilization; the heart of feudal economics was land-holding and personal service—the Middle Ages produced another civilization; the heart of nineteenth century economics was the capitalist organization of machine-production—and there was a third civilization. Two things are again to be noted. The interaction of politics, religion, invention and thought on the economic foundation Marx and Engels specifically admit; they would admit, even, in some respects, the *relative* independence of these things. And each economic system, each civilization grows out of the preceding one. Perhaps one should add that Marx was not the first thus to put his finger on the economic factor; there were, among others, Harrington in England in the seventeenth century and Madison in America in the eighteenth.

(b) This brings us to the reason for historic change. 'Every considerable advance in material civilization,' says Mill, 'has been



preceded by an advance in knowledge.' Perhaps so; but are we to say *post hoc ergo propter hoc*? The Absolute, the Spirit, the Rational, says Hegel, dialectically works itself out in fresh approximations to freedom. But Marx takes Hegel, and, as Hegel would have said, stands him on his head—as Marx himself said, turns him right side up again. Yes, he argues, the process of history is a process of dialectic, but of *materialist* dialectic. It is not the spirit that giveth life; it is the everyday material evolution and struggle that gives variety and vitality to the spirit. In feudalism grow the seeds of capitalism—one economic system fosters darkly the life of another; in capitalism are the growing seeds of something else. Growth is natural and, up to a certain point, unimpeded. Up to what point, and why and by whom is it impeded? The economic arrangement at any particular time in any particular society, says Marx (in England, for example, in the eighteenth century) presupposes that the fundamental factor (in this case the land) is in the possession of a certain economic class, the landed aristocracy and gentry. Economic ownership will be reflected in political ownership; the landed aristocracy will dominate parliament, and exert the parliamentary system in its own interests. The state, that is, has never historically been the impartial and mediating instrument of good to all men (except, perhaps, by accident, for an infinitesimal time); it has been a political instrument for safeguarding the economic position of those who have controlled it. They may believe they are acting in the interests of all; inevitably, to paraphrase a sentence of Burke's, they elevate their private prejudices into principles of public policy.

But the economic system changes. Agricultural production takes second place in economic importance to factory production. The fundamental factor is not land but capital—in the narrower sense. Capital, as it grows in power, will claim proportionate political influence; if it ever becomes unassailably supreme, it will assume the whole might of the state directing the state machinery in its own exclusive interests. Will that—can that—happen without friction? It has never happened without friction historically, says Marx, for a ruling class has never relinquished power voluntarily; it has always assumed the chances sufficiently in its favour to make it worth while to fight. There is a political contradiction existent; can the thesis and the antithesis find peaceful issue in synthesis? 'Where,' said Hegel, 'the power to develop the contradiction and bring it to a head is lacking, the thing or the being is shattered on the contradiction.' 'And,' says Marx, 'when the ruling class cannot abandon its exclusive power in the face of sufficient demand it, too,

is shattered on its contradiction.' A new economic class, the fated child of the old, takes up the burden and advantage of political power, until in its turn it suffers challenge and destruction. A ruling class *may* carry resistance to its extremist point short of bloodshed, and then decide reluctantly on compromise, as happened in England in 1832, but that is the exception; and we know how near to armed insurrection England was in 1832. It has generally chosen to fight. France may be our classical example, unless we care to come nearer to the contemporary scene. For Marx did not merely interpret the past. A valid philosophy of history, he argued, would explain the present and prophesy the future. The history of the future would still be the history of class-struggle, between the middle-class as thesis and the proletariat as antithesis; the dialectical outcome after a time of dictatorship would be a synthesis different in nature from either, the classless society of communism. That future age would know its own dialectic, but its struggles would not be those of class against inevitable class. Yet the elements of life would still be material, like the earth, into whatever shapes of heroism, or intelligence, or beauty they might flower.

Thus briefly and crudely the first principles of historical materialism. There is this to say of Marx; he realizes and asserts the historical nature of any philosophy of history, including his own. As a philosophy of history it works a good deal better, I think, than any other yet recorded—as long as we take it with the mature modifications of its authors (one must not leave out the Engels from Marx). And his philosophy, like those of the eighteenth century Frenchmen and of Mill, is not a closed system. It leaves room for the future. It is hardly final; class-struggle we may accept, with modifications, while having the very gravest doubts about the dialectic.<sup>9</sup> The cast of Marx's mind remained Germanic—he must have his myth. 'The *Ewig-Weibliche* of Goethe,' says Edmund Wilson, 'the *kategorische Imperativ* of Kant, the *Weltgeist* with its *Idee* of Hegel—these have dominated the minds of the Germans and haunted European thought in general like great hovering legendary divinities.'<sup>10</sup> Not the *Idee* but the *Dialektik* hovered over Marx; in the shadow of its enormous wings he and his followers thought and wrought. Wrought; for, as he wrote in famous words, 'The philosophers have only *interpreted*

9. Marx is at last being discussed in English with adequate historical insight and in terms unvitiated by polemic. Apart from biographical work there have recently appeared such interesting analytical and critical studies as Sidney Hook's *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* (London, 1933); *From Hegel to Marx* (London, 1936); I. Berlin's Home University Library volume *Karl Marx* (London, 1939); H. P. Adam's *Karl Marx in his Earlier Writings*; Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station* (London, 1941). This list is, of course, far from inclusive.

10. Edmund Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 190.



the world: the point is, however, to change it.' Unlike most historians, and like a severe minority of philosophers, he has contributed to the most vital foundations of the modern world.

Scorn not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frown'd,  
Mindless of its just honours;

implored Wordsworth, with some persuasiveness; adding that in the hand of Milton the thing became a trumpet. Scorn not the philosophy of history, we may echo, to the frowning historian: this thing, too, in the hand of Marx became a trumpet, which sang to battle and the barricades in a not ignoble cause. It is indeed very doubtful if for the next few hundred years men will be able to work, or think, or write except in the shadow, tremendous and lengthening, of Marx. To the historian—perhaps I should say the philosophical historian—of the future, he will inevitably appear a figure of giant-like proportions, a thinker at once culminatory and seminal, as not many other men have been—with this distinction over other men also, that the philosophy of history which he elaborated alike shed light on the past, was used as a critical method of historical investigation, and formed the background and basis for a new social order. If to the philosophy of history Descartes bequeathed reason, if Vico gave it perspective and Montesquieu breadth, if the *philosophes* gave it a future and Hegel an inner movement, Marx gave it strategy and a defined object and deeds to do.

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## HISTORICAL RECORDS IN AUSTRALIAN BANKS

IN the last issue of HISTORICAL STUDIES the editor printed selections from the Union Bank's Portland Letter Book, which is an excellent example of the historical material to be gathered from the archives of business firms. At the present time there is a grave risk that, whether from patriotism or a mere desire to get rid of old junk, firms will discard material such as this along with much other matter which should rightly go to feed the paper mills. In the course of work on the early development of the Australian monetary system, I have had occasion to consult most of the bank records known to survive from the period before 1850. It is proper to place on record that every bank approached has willingly made its records available as soon as it was understood that serious historical investigation was proposed.

It is clear that much material of great historical value is held by business firms such as the banks, but it is also clear that there has been a great destruction, and that many of the institutions holding such records are unaware that they have an historical value apart from the story of the particular business. The usefulness of minute books and letter books for tracing the history of particular firms is obvious, although comparatively little use has been made of them in Australia, in contrast with the institutional histories which are so well done in England and the United States. Only two Australian banks, the State Savings Bank of Victoria and the Government Savings Bank of New South Wales, have been the subject of adequate histories by Cooch and Griffiths, respectively. Accounts of other banks, such as the *Views of the Premises of the Bank of New South Wales*, *A Century of Thrift* (the Launceston Bank for Savings), the privately circulated *Historical Sketch of the Hobart Savings Bank* and *A Century of Banking* (Commercial Banking Company of Sydney), must be rated as high class advertising matter rather than serious history. Yet, for most of the surviving banks, it would be possible to write histories which would contribute to a knowledge of Australian economic development and which would, incidentally, have a more enduring advertising value than some of the work which has been done.

The available bank records show that they have a wider value, not merely for monetary history in general, but also because of the commentary on current affairs and economic developments which they provide and the biographical material buried in minutes and



letter books. Such records are of greater importance in the early period of Australian development. In the latter part of the nineteenth century the volume of other sources is greater. Moreover, the early bank managers were not specialists, but engaged in private business as well, and their views reflected the knowledge gained in more than one field. An extreme example was Charles Swanston, whose liquidator and business associates had hard words to say about his inability to keep separate the business of the Derwent Bank and his own complex and varied affairs. Bank managers of the time had no greater claim to omniscience and profundity than have bank managers to-day, but they were more intimately associated with a wider range of economic and social affairs, and, even when they are merely expressing opinions, they are entitled to far more respect than the travellers' books which are so frequently quoted as authorities.

In the case of some of the early banks, internal records appear to have vanished completely. At least thirty-six institutions which can definitely be regarded as banks operated in Australia before 1850, and nearly twenty more were seriously projected, yet records survive from only a dozen, and in some cases these are extremely scanty. For the Commercial Bank of Tasmania, for instance, apart from account books and the like of recent date, there survive only the original deed of settlement of 1832 and the record of a special meeting in 1839. These are preserved in the E.S. & A. Bank in Hobart. Of the Tamar Bank, there remain in the Union Bank, Launceston, only two letters, one authorizing negotiations for a merger with the Union Bank and the other reporting a temporary closure in 1836. The Commercial Banking Company of Sydney has no records of its early days, although it does hold the remaining papers of the Bathurst Bank.

The bank records of most value are minute books, letter books, reports by managers, inspectors and similar officers. For a number of the early savings banks there are minute books. Thus, the Savings Bank of Victoria holds the original minute book of the Port Phillip Savings Bank from 1841 to 1853, when the bank passed under the control of Commissioners. The Hobart Savings Bank has its first minute book (1845-1858) and the Launceston Bank for Savings a minute book for 1835-1853, and an account book containing balance sheets and summary statements for 1844-1862. The Commonwealth Savings Bank in Sydney has the surviving records of the old New South Wales Savings Bank established in 1832, the important ones, apart from some account books, being an outward letter book for 1832-1854, and a minute book for 1832-1855. Of

Campbell's Savings Bank (1819-1832), it holds only some imperfect copies of registers of convict depositors.

Some bank records have found their way to libraries. The Mitchell Library has some fragmentary 'Bank of New South Wales Papers,' consisting of a few board minutes and similar items from the first few years. The Melbourne Public Library holds the outward letter book of the Port Phillip Bank and the papers of the Melbourne agency of the Derwent Bank. The banks themselves are showing a greater respect for their records and making definite efforts to preserve selected documents. The Bank of New South Wales, under its present general manager, has definitely set out to create institutional archives, although for the early period there are many gaps. The Bank of Australasia preserves in its Melbourne office records of all its branches, except that the Launceston branch is permitted to retain its first minute book covering 1835-1840. The head office records are, however, not classified or indexed as yet.

The Union Bank, from whose Portland letter book Mr. James took his extracts, holds perhaps the most valuable collection. Its Hobart branch has two minute books covering 1838-1855, but other records are centralized in Melbourne. These comprise annual reports of the Launceston manager for 1849-1853, reviewing the general conditions of Tasmania; the London letter-book of the Adelaide branch for 1849-1853; and several volumes of inspectors' reports on the various branches, namely Sydney 1842-1850, Launceston 1845-1854, Melbourne 1844-1853, Hobart 1845-1854. Any one volume may contain reports on other branches, and while the main body of the reports consists of detail on the administration of the branch in question, there are also many general comments on current affairs and a great deal of biographical material relating to customers. In addition, the Union Bank holds the records of the Bank of South Australia. For the period before 1850 these include minutes for 1842-1844, letters from the London office for 1836-1839, and two volumes of letters to the London Office for 1837-1840 and 1840-1844. These last are particularly valuable since they date from the very first settlement, and the manager wrote at great length on the new colony, the affairs of the bank occupying very small space in his earliest letters.

A striking example of the value of records which probably still remain undiscovered, and the risks of destruction involved, is given by the Swanston and Derwent Bank papers. In Hobart, in February 1941, I learnt that Mr. Dallas of the University staff had located some papers of the Derwent Bank, but naval service had prevented him from examining them. Through the good offices of the



Governor of Tasmania, His Excellency Sir Ernest Clark, I was able to examine them. The liquidator of the Derwent Bank was John Walker, whose business interests included flour milling. The papers in question were still lying in his disused mill and had descended to his relative, Mrs. C. N. Atkins of Hobart. They consisted of a pile of books, some 15 feet long and 4 feet high in two rows. Evidently their value had never been realized, because they were covered in many years' accumulation of dirt and had apparently been played with by children, who had used them as material for drawing, for paper cutting and for pressing flowers. Examination showed that most of the books were detailed account books, varying from small, rough-memoranda books to ledgers almost too big to move. There were, however, six books of letters, which Mrs. Atkins kindly lent me for examination at leisure. It was then that I realized the full value of the discovery. Three of the books were Derwent Bank outward letters from 1829-1854, and the other three outward letters relating to Swanston's private business affairs. They are not complete and they have suffered some damage, but the main body of the letters is intact. They are of the first importance for any study of the economic history of Tasmania for the period they cover. There is a great deal of information on the Derwent Bank itself, which can be obtained from no other source. Even the date of the closure of the bank in 1849 has previously been unknown. There is also the material for a biography of Swanston, who has been a very obscure figure, in spite of the amount of time which investigators have devoted to the Port Phillip Association. The *Australian Encyclopaedia*, Heaton's *Dictionary of Dates and Men of the Time*, and Johns' *Australian Biographical Dictionary* do not give him an entry. These papers give his career from the time he left the East India Company's service in 1829 to his death. There is also some valuable new material on the Port Phillip Association showing, for example, how G. D. Mercer was introduced. Throughout there is a great deal of illuminating material on import and export trade, the finance of primary industry, the technique of capital import and the methods by which absentee capitalists invested in Australia. A fuller account of these papers will appear in the next issue of HISTORICAL STUDIES.

These records have now been presented by Mrs. Atkins to the Royal Society in Hobart, whose secretary, Dr. Pearson, generously agreed to the making of photostatic copies by the Mitchell Library. They are now safe and available to investigators, although for ninety years they must have been in constant danger of destruction as so much junk.

Throughout Australia, in the hands of either business firms or private individuals, there must be many similar records whose value is not recognized, and which may be destroyed in the present search for waste paper. The great bulk of business records have no claim for preservation, but those of historical value are apt not to be recognized. Somewhere there may be papers of the Commercial Bank of Tasmania, which would throw light on the career of the semi-literate, aggressive John Dunn, or papers of the Bank of Australia, the Colonial Bank, the Sydney Bank, or (among more recent closures), the Bank of Van Diemen's Land. It may not matter that there are not any surviving papers of the Longford or Port Stephen's Savings Banks, but records of these other banks would be as valuable as those of the Derwent.

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### ACCESSIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS

PUBLIC LIBRARY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA—ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT:  
The Archivist, Box 386A, G.P.O., Adelaide.

*The following are the most important acquisitions, January to June 1942 (see vol. i, p. 49):*

Port Pirie shipping registers: inwards, 1878 to 1916; outwards, 1897 to 1935.

Autobiography of Captain C. H. Bagot (1788 to 1854).

Seven letters written in 1859-62 by W. D. Kekwick while second-in-command of J. McDouall Stuart's exploring expeditions.

Commission issued by Bishop Broughton to the Rev. C. B. Howard, South Australia's first Colonial Chaplain, 1837.

Miscellaneous papers relative to the erection of Colonel Light's monument in Light Square, Adelaide, 1840-43.

THE MITCHELL LIBRARY, SYDNEY: The Librarian, Miss I. E. Leeson.

*The following are the most important acquisitions in 1941:*

Manuscript journal of Farquhar Mackenzie, 1836-50, describing his arrival in Sydney in November 1836 and the taking up of grazing land in the Monaro district early in 1837. The journal also describes visits to Goulburn, Molonglo, Bredbo, etc. There is a gap from October 1837 to March 1839, when Mackenzie was at Kerrisdale, Port Phillip. He left there in July 1849 to become manager at Bayarg, Lake Boga.

Original document containing signatures of members of the Association for Obtaining Permission to Import Coolies or Other Labourers from India, dated 1842. (The memorial from this association was rejected by the Home Government in 1843.)

Set of *Historical Records of Australia*, with sources of original documents written in by the editor, Dr. Frederick Watson.



## WRITINGS ON AUSTRALIAN HISTORY, 1941-2<sup>1</sup>

With the entry of Japan into the war, and its near approach to our own shores, the concentration necessary for serious historical research has become in most cases impossible, and the difficulties of publishing work on any large scale, always great, have become greater. Nevertheless, the output of smaller works and pamphlets at least bears witness to a continued lively interest in our past, even among the crowding urgencies of the present.

(a) *Biography*.—Biographies cover a wide field. Frank Clune has written in his usual breezy undocumented style on *Chinese Morrison* (Bread and Cheese Club, Melbourne, 10/6), *D'air devil: the story of 'Pard' Mustar*, who pioneered civil aviation in New Guinea (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 6/-), and *Last of the Australian explorers: the story of Donald Mackay* (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 12/6). Vincent Kelly's *Achieving a vision: the life story of P. W. Tewksbury* (George M. Dash, Sydney, 21/-), is a somewhat adulatory account of the subject's flamboyant career in 'big business,' during which he founded Yellow Cabs and was concerned with a number of gold-mining ventures, in some of which he was associated with the late J. C. Watson. A very different career is described in R. S. Maynard's *His was the vision: the life of C. E. D. Meares: which is also the story of the C.F.S. and the P.D.S.* (Producers' Co-operative Distributing Society, Sydney), a sober account of the building of a great co-operative organization among the primary producers of N.S.W., which is a historical document of value. A short memoir by A. H. Knight, *The life and work of Bertram Dillon Steele* (Amy Steele, Brisbane, 2/-), commemorates a Professor of Chemistry in Brisbane who did valuable munitions work in England in 1914-18. Philip Lindsay's *I'd live the same life over* (Hutchinson, London, 18/-) contains some reminiscences of Bohemian life in Sydney in the 1920's, which may be compared with the fuller picture of the world of sensational journalism of the same period by F. E. Baume in *I lived these years* (Harrap, London, 8/6). Another contrast is offered by two autobiographies—*Denis O'Callaghan's long life: reminiscences and adventures throughout the world* (Author, Perth 21/-), a diffuse and wordy account of early days on the West Australian goldfields, and especially of the author's many sporting and athletic triumphs; and Bernard O'Reilly's *Green mountains* (W. R. Smith and Paterson, Brisbane, 6/6 and 3/9), a modest and sensitively written account of pioneering life in the McPherson Ranges in south Queensland. Vance Palmer's selection *A. G. Stephens: his life and work* contains a short memoir. D. W. Hicks, *A printer's retrospection* (Author, Melbourne 1/-) tells briefly of the early days of the establishment of the Commonwealth Government Printing Office in Melbourne and of its transfer to Canberra.

(b) *Special Periods*.—B. C. Smith in *Shadow over Tasmania: for the first time—the truth about the State's convict history* (J. Walch & Sons, Hobart, 3/-) is at pains, in a popular form, to 'treat the convict days in a bright, common sense manner.' The book will serve to correct the over-emphasis on horrors common in popular accounts, and, though it contains nothing very new to the historian, will serve to give the general reader a well-informed account of this period of Tasmanian history. A. H. Chisholm's *Strange new world: the adventures of John Gilbert and Ludwig Leichhardt* (Angus & Robertson, 12/6) is based on Gilbert's newly discovered diaries, valuable extracts from which are printed. The conclusions

1. To June, 1942. See vol. i, p. 275.

drawn are unfavourable to Leichhardt. *Waterless horizons: the first full-length study of the extraordinary life-story of Edward John Eyre* by M. Uren and R. Stephens (Robertson & Mullens, Melbourne, 12/6) is full, but does not add much that is new and is marred by a number of inaccuracies. Two important volumes of original documents have been published. *Clyde Company Papers: Prologue 1821-35*, edited by P. L. Brown (Oxford University Press, London, 8/6) deals with settlement in Tasmania and the early connections of that colony with India. Alfred Joyce's reminiscences and letters, *A homestead history . . . 1843-1864*, edited by G. F. James (Melbourne University Press, 10/6) provides interesting data for the early squatting and goldfields periods in Victoria. W. R. Glasson's *Our shepherds* (Author) affords a footnote to pastoral history before the coming of fences. N. K. Harvey's *From Anzac to the Hindenburg line: the history of the 9th battalion*, A.I.F. continues the series of detailed battalion histories of the war of 1914-18. Of the material on the present war, the following may be found useful by future historians: Australian Institute of International Affairs, Research Section, *Australian home front: a war-time record, 1939-41* (The Institute, Melbourne, 1/-); S. J. Butlin and others, *Australia foots the bill: war finance, 1939-41*; (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 4/6) and G. H. Johnston, *Grey gladiators: H.M.A.S. Sydney with the British Mediterranean fleet*. (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 8/6.)

(c) *Local history*.—The Pioneers' Association of South Australia have continued their series of short pamphlets, two having appeared during the year under notice: *The Herberts: a pioneer family of the Yankalilla district*, ed. by G. C. Morphett; and *Adelaide's early inns and taverns* by John McLellan. James Jervis has edited *The story of Drummoyne: official publication to commemorate the golden jubilee of the Drummoyne Municipal Council* (Trend Publications, Parramatta, 2/-). R. T. Wyatt's *History of Goulburn N.S.W.* (Municipality of Goulburn, 10/-) is noticed elsewhere in this issue.

(d) *Religious history*.—In *Church beginnings in the West* (John Muhling, Perth, 5/-.) Canon A. Burton, the recognized authority on this subject, traces the fortunes of the Church of England in W.A. up to 1875, and includes a biographical dictionary of all clergy up to that date (see also p. 64 *supra*.) Commemorative booklets have been issued by several churches: *St. Peter's Church of England, Richmond, N.S.W.: a short history of the parish, 1810-1941*, by P. W. Gledhill (St. Peter's Parish Council, Richmond, 2/-); *History of the Mitchell Memorial Presbyterian church, Goodwood, S.A. 1931-41* (Author, Adelaide, 6d.); and *One hundred years: the story of the Melbourne Hebrew congregation, 1841-1941*, compiled by Rabbi Dr. H. Freedman and A. N. Super. The Rt. Rev. de Witt Batty, Bishop of Newcastle, has put into a small pamphlet his *Constitutional memories* (Author, 6d.). A selection from the Reports of the Presbyterian Women's Missionary Association of N.S.W., 1891-1940, has been printed under the title *Jottings* (Robert Dey, Sydney, 1/-.)

(e) *Other Works*.—E. J. B. Foxcroft's *Australian native policy: its history especially in Victoria* (Melbourne University Press, 10/-) is valuable for its main subject, but disappointing for the other states. W. H. Hudspeth has briefly recorded the history of *The Hobart Maternal and Dorcas Society* (Oldham, Beddome and Meredith, Hobart, 1/-.)

(f) *Fiction*.—Once again, there has been a number of novels inspired by early Australian history. Two of these are of some interest: *The timeless land*



(Collins, Sydney, 10/6) in which Eleanor Dark attempts to re-create the atmosphere of the first years of the settlement, especially as it affected the aborigines, and *My love must wait* (Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 8/6), by Ernestine Hill, a romanticized biography of Flinders. Mrs. Rix Weaver's *New Holland heritage* (Paterson's Printing Press, 7/6), a sequel to her *Behold New Holland*, carries the characters through the convict period of Western Australia and, like its predecessor, gives an impression of being based on family traditions.

(g) *Reprints*.—The fashion of reprinting historical documents in special limited editions is exemplified by three books. *The Eureka stockade*, by Carboni Raffaello (Sunnybrook Press, 63/-), is valuable not only for its text, but especially for its thorough and judicious introduction by the Hon. H. V. Evatt. James Bonwick's *Notes of a gold digger*, edited by E. E. Pescott (Hawthorn Press, Melbourne, 10/6) and the very attractive reprint of Barron Field's *First fruits of Australian poetry* (Barn on the Hill, Sydney, 5/-) will interest those in search of 'period atmosphere.'

L. F. FITZHARDINGE

## REVIEWS

### ARCHAEOLOGY

*The Shellal Mosaic*. By A. D. Trendall. Pp. 27, 6 figures, 5 plates (2 in colour). Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1942. (Obtainable from the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.)

It is seldom that a War Memorial contains monuments of higher artistic value than the instruments of war itself. The Australian War Memorial has the distinction of preserving the Shellal Mosaic, the Lady of Palmyra and some other fragments of mosaic, not only as the sign of Australian achievement in the Middle East but as a splendid example of Byzantine art with a wide aesthetic appeal.

The Shellal Mosaic was discovered in April, 1917, during the second battle of Gaza, when the Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division took the site from the Turks. The Turks had uncovered it in digging two trenches through it, and this has left it in a damaged condition. By the authority of General Chauvel and under the supervision of Chaplain Maitland Woods, a party of volunteers turned to archaeological excavation. They removed the soil to a depth of six feet and photographed and sketched the mosaic. Then they poured hot glue on the mosaic, spread linen canvas over it, and when it was set gently lifted it out in sections. The engineers came in to make a plaster of paris bath, where the pieces could be put together again. Thus the mosaic was preserved and reset in its original form. The mosaic nearly went to England, but finally landed in Australia early in 1919. It is now displayed on a specially designed wall in the Australian War Memorial at Canberra.

In Byzantine churches mosaics took the place of painting in Western churches, with brilliant effects in colouring and the reflection of light. The Byzantine artists found their best medium of expression in mosaic work, where they continued the floor mosaics of the Greek and Roman world and developed wall and roof mosaics. Their style grew out of three elements: the Hellenistic, with shading and perspective; the Syrian or Semitic, vivid, with frontal figures and contrasts; and the Eastern, non-representational, with patterns and symbolism rather than figures. There were three periods. The first (4th-7th cent.) shows these elements

combining to form one style; the second, the Iconoclast period (8th cent.), has non-representational decoration; the third (9th-12th cent.) is mature and unified in conception and technique.

The Shellal Mosaic was a floor mosaic. It is dated by an inscription to A.D. 561-2, in the reign of Justinian, which brings it within the first period of style. Its precise dating makes it important in the systematic study of Byzantine art. The mosaic is characteristic of the work of its period. It has a border in meander pattern with square panels containing Christian symbolic objects, e.g. a fish, a chalice, a dove with olive spray, a sandal, a pomegranate. The main design consisted of a vine rising from a central amphora ('I am the true vine; ye are the branches'), with tendrils in deep red going up in trellis work to form medallions in nine horizontal rows of five; the top three rows are lost and little more than half of the original remains. The medallions are filled with a variety of beasts and birds, the central vertical row having inanimate objects, e.g. baskets, vases, bird-cages. These seem to be as much ornamental as symbolical. The beasts and birds are arranged in 'heraldic' positions, facing in towards the central vertical row from either side. The amphora at the bottom was flanked by two peacocks, the symbol of immortality. Most of the right-hand peacock disappeared by 'souveniring' before the mosaic was taken up, but is known from one of the earlier sketches. The colouring of the remaining peacock, especially the greens and gold, is beautiful. Here the War Memorial has been extraordinarily fortunate in Mr. Napier Waller's painting of the mosaic. He has done it brilliantly, and two of the splendid plates in the publication are in colour, taken from his work. The quality of the illustrations alone would set this publication in a class of its own. The figures in the text are admirably chosen to illustrate the description and discussion. Particularly interesting is the comparison with a similar mosaic in the Armenian Church at Jerusalem.

The Lady of Palmyra came to Australia in romantic circumstances. Two Australian airmen forced down in the desert near Palmyra were saved by a sheikh's son. General Chauvel in thanking the sheikh gave him a gold watch: in return the sheikh gave General Chauvel the sculptured portrait of the Lady of Palmyra. The lady is a wealthy matron, with rich dress and jewels, shown holding the distaff and spindle, the emblems of the housewife. It is a very beautiful example of Palmyrene art, which in its maturity shows balanced Hellenistic representation enriched by oriental elegance, minute decoration and conspicuous stylistic grace.

This is a magnificently produced work, both in its text and in its illustrations. It is also a work of consummate scholarship. Professor Trendall's description and discussion are a model of their kind, blending full knowledge, technical criticism, artistic appreciation and a clear and pleasant style. The arrangement of text and illustrations is a tribute to his taste. *The Shellal Mosaic* has received worthy publication.

A. H. McDONALD

#### REMINISCENCES

*A Homestead History: being the reminiscences and letters of Alfred Joyce, of Plaistow and Norwood, Port Phillip, 1843-1864.* With notes and introduction by G. F. James. Pp. 200, illus. Melbourne University Press, 1942. 10/6.

It is very unusual to get a book of this kind in Australia. Most of the reminiscences and letters published here (and they are all too few) are edited by some



member of the family of the writer. This book is edited by a trained historian, and is supplied with copious notes which not only elucidate the text, but also form a running commentary on certain aspects of the history of Victoria. It always seems to me that an author who sends any historical work into the world without an index should be punished by having his latch key taken away for a period commensurate with the length of the book. Mr. James has evidently felt a like exasperation; for he supplies this book with three different kinds of index—persons and partnerships, place-names, and general. Cheers.

The editor makes clear in his preface that his object in publishing is partly propaganda. But it is propaganda for a very good cause—that of saving from the pulping press the many collections of historical records lying in the lumber rooms of official places up and down the country. If this is not done, we shall be immeasurably poorer in materials for our own history. Yet I confess that I cannot see how this menace can be met unless public authorities (municipal, state and federal) will set free some trained persons like Mr. James to examine and sift the masses of material that have accumulated in odd official corners. The need is all the more urgent since, under the stimulus of the war drive for waste paper, old records are being cast out in bales full. The editor pungently suggests that our 'various historical societies might devote more attention than they have done so far to these fundamental problems of sources and a little less to the sterile cataloguing of the first lamp-post.' I agree, but my feeling is that the appointment of researchers and archivists is the only satisfactory way to meet this problem.

The reminiscences and letters make interesting reading. This youngster of twenty-two, a journeyman millwright and engineer, arrived in Melbourne in 1843 and was immediately caught up in pastoral activities. He tells the story of the next twenty-one years, at the end of which he is a thriving squatter owning 3,000 acres, leasing 25,000 more, and with 500 of them under the plough—no mean achievement. He does it all by hard work and a native shrewdness that, while urging him to try new dodges, forbids him to speculate. Joyce was what Australians would call 'a handy bloke' and to him and his like we owe much of the Australian tradition of improvisation. He contrives a wind-mill, then a water-mill. He designs and builds bridges (and takes toll from the vehicles that pass over them). He is one of the earliest purchasers of agricultural machinery in Victoria. Having no theodolite, he surveys his holding with a compass and chains; then he makes a plan of it, which Mr. James reproduces and which irresistibly suggests a caricature of the late Edward Carson.

But his story, disappointingly enough, throws no fresh light on the goldfields' period. It illustrates what we know was happening. At first he moans about the shortage of labour and the probable extinction of the pastoral industry. But later we see the carcase gaining on the fleece, the profits to be made from feeding the diggers and the price of wool gradually rising in the English market. Finally we see the alluvial gold petering out and the labour shortage righting itself. All this we knew and Joyce's memoirs do but confirm it. Most of his references to the gold discoveries are a chant of doom. His is the typical squatter's reaction to the situation. He repeats the usual stories about the lynchings at the fields and appears to think the Eureka Stockade served the diggers right. He makes the expected naive remarks about labour and its exorbitance; how he paid shearers ten shillings a hundred, 'but they were satisfied with it and did not attempt to strike or form unions.' Eight years later he was to pay them 'the extravagant rate' of thirty shillings a hundred and be glad to get them.

More interesting than the light they throw on Australian history is the light these reminiscences and letters throw upon Alfred Joyce. He is early Victorian in two senses. His outlook is that of nineteenth century capitalism. His paradise

is security. 'I have a great many temptations to speculate here, but the fear of incurring liabilities has always withheld me. I have a good few irons in the fire now, but they are all of them pretty safe.' Thirteen years after his arrival this journeyman millwright sums up his ambitions—'a wife, a good house and garden, a good table, to be placed above the necessity of manual labour, to drive a gig with a good horse, to have a few agreeable visiting friends, to be out of debt and to have a constant moderate balance at my bankers.'

Some day when the creative fit is on me, I shall turn literary and write a novel about this Victorian pioneer. As the 'Man of Property' has been appropriated as a title, I shall call it 'Cautious Alfred.' Part of it will be scissors and paste from Mr. James' book. But for the rest I shall have to use my imagination. For Alfred gives me little help about his attitude to things of the spirit. His letters to his parents reveal a man almost entirely pre-occupied with his material concerns. He is religious in the sense of his age; that is to say, he and his brother hold service on Sunday evenings at the homestead, singing Watts' hymns to the music of an accordeon. But there are no communings with the infinite. He is the most unsentimental of men. He just mentions his engagement, but not a word of his courtship. He tells us that his wife cooks for him and he describes the kitchen furniture, but only once, quite casually, does he mention that she bore him children. The difficulty will be to import the high note of tragedy into my novel. For, if tragedy there was in Alfred Joyce's life, he never mentions it.

Nevertheless, Alfred was a good Australian and we owe much to him and his type. He worked hard for his own good and in so doing did good to his adopted country. He grew to love the place. 'I find here a sphere of usefulness which I do not know I should have in England and my endeavour now will be to make this spot my permanent home for me and men after me.' Mr. James deserves our thanks for rescuing him from oblivion. And I am very glad that Mr. James, in his notes, has seized the opportunity of saying how much all of us owe to the generous and unobtrusive work of Ida Leeson, of the Mitchell Library, Sydney.

G. V. PORTUS

*The Last of the Logan: the true adventures of Robert Coffin, mariner, in the years 1854 to 1859*; edited, with an introduction, by Harold W. Thompson. Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 1941. Pp. 214. \$2.

Described on the dustjacket as 'a narrative of whaling and shipwreck, life among the cannibals of Fiji, escape to Sydney and the bush, the Australian gold rush,' more than a third of these reminiscences is concerned with Robert Coffin's experiences in Australia, and about a fifth with Fiji. Coffin (1833-1914), born on a farm in Dutchess County, New York, took to the sea, thinking to earn money for an education, was a recruiting officer in the Civil War, tried various other occupations, became a schoolmaster, and in Minnesota, at the age of 53, graduated from an institution of higher learning. On his death in 1914 his widow wrote, 'I have burned the poor boy's letters written home during his wanderings, as his sisters directed.' How familiar and grievous a ring have these words! The contemporary record is destroyed: we have in its place his reminiscences, written over fifty years later, when approaching the age of eighty. But, unlike many writers of reminiscences, he had his record to draw on, and the result is a story always interesting, sometimes vivid. On the whaling voyage in the *Logan* New Zealand was visited, and shortly afterwards the ship was wrecked on Conway or Rapid Reef. A boat voyage of five days brought the crew to the Fijis. There



Coffin shipped for Australia, arriving at Sydney in May 1855. At the end of March 1859, he sailed from Sydney for home and the Civil War.

On the arrival of the shipwrecked mariners in Fiji, they were parcelled out among the white residents of Ngau, and Coffin fell to David Whippey, one of the most influential men in the islands, who had lived there thirty years and married first a queen, then the sister of the king, Tui Levuka. His account of Whippey, and of a visit by King George of Tonga, have some historical interest.

When he reached Sydney, Coffin made a brief stay in the town before taking a job on a farm in the Colo Valley. After a year there he set out for the goldfields. First at the Turon, then at Pyramul, he sought gold for two years. Returning to Sydney in September 1858, he joined the Water Police and served in it until his departure for America. One evening, on guard duty in Watson's Bay, he heard the band of the Austrian frigate *Novara*, anchored nearby, and recalled it as one of the memorable episodes of his life, far better than Sousa or Thomas!

The Australian story is full of lively incidents, and special interest attaches to his contacts with United States consular officials. He describes J. H. Williams, the first U.S. consul in Australia, thus: 'A Boston man, probably, educated at Bowdoin College. He married a Miss Mersereau (this should be de Mestre), and lived in the suburbs of Sydney. I think he received his official pay in fees and was doing a commission business besides, as I saw many articles of American manufacture' (in his office). Williams sent him to a stevedore for work, and his first job was on a shipload of yellow-pine lumber to be carried into the consul's yard. While on this kind of work he received an offer from the U.S. consul at Auckland, then visiting Sydney, to go to New Zealand as vice-consul. This man, J. B. Williams, a retired naval officer, he describes as 'an entirely different man from J.H., dressed in naval uniform, tall, with a big aquiline nose.' The commission was signed and sealed, but a condition was that the prospective vice-consul should invest every cent he received in a certain kind of gum (presumably kauri). As there was a vice-consul still in office, who might prove difficult, and no remuneration was specified, Coffin was canny and refused the offer.

Had his letters survived and been published, we might have had more than these brief glimpses of his country's representatives abroad. And his descriptions of Sydney and the goldfields are generally so accurate, as well as lively, that the Australian reader can only regret the loss of any part of the record of Robert Coffin, mariner.

-I. LEESON

#### GUIDES TO MSS. COLLECTIONS

*Preliminary guide to the manuscript collection in the Toronto Public Libraries*; prepared by Florence B. Murray and Elsie McLeod Murray. Toronto, Toronto Public Libraries, 1940.

*Dominion of Canada, Report of the Public Archives for the year 1941*. Ottawa, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1942.

These two Canadian publications have special interest for Australian historians, because both are concerned in part with Sir George Arthur and the Canadian rebellion of 1837. Arthur, Governor of Van Diemen's Land from 1824 to 1836, was next appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, and administered the province as the last of its Lieutenant-Governors from 1838 to 1841. His knighthood was conferred for his services in Van Diemen's Land, and his baronetcy for those in Upper Canada.

The Toronto manuscript collection includes papers of Sir George Arthur, 1837-1842, in 6 volumes and 1,232 pieces. They are, on the whole, confidential, private, and demi-official, although a few dispatches and official papers are copied, apparently because of their particular significance. Those of Australian interest concern the trial and punishment of prisoners following the rebellion of 1837, and, in volume 6, there are a number of official letters written in Van Diemen's Land, as well as family and personal correspondence during the Canadian period. Among the in-letters and copies of out-letters it is likely that some are to or from individuals in Van Diemen's Land, and it is hoped that further information about these may be given in a supplementary note.

There is also a collection of material on the 1837 rebellion, acquired by Edwin C. Guillet, author of *The Lives and Times of the Patriots*. (Toronto, Nelson, 1938.) It consists of portraits, photostats, copies of mss., and letters concerning men who took part in the rebellion. Among the names listed are those of Daniel D. Heustis, Linus W. Miller, Samuel Snow and Elijah Woodman, all of whom were transported to Australia, and of whom the first three published books on their experiences.

The report of the Canadian Keeper of Public Records is noteworthy for its continuation of the Calendar of State Papers composed of the official correspondence of the Governors of Lower Canada. The State Papers (of which these are a part) designated as Series Q. at the Public Archives, Ottawa, and Series C.O. 42 at the Public Record Office, London, comprise 431 volumes, and extend from 1760 to 1840 for Quebec and Lower Canada, and from 1791 to 1841 for Upper Canada. The volumes to 1838 for Lower and to 1836 for Upper Canada were calendared under the first Dominion Archivist, and published as appendices to the annual reports of the Archives from 1890 to 1902. The work, discontinued on his death, was resumed in 1937 and is now finished. Instalments will appear in successive reports until the series is complete. This volume contains the calendar of the Lower Canada correspondence for the years 1837-1839. Hence it covers two years of Arthur's governorship of the neighbouring province, and the period of the rebellion. Extending over more than 300 pages, it is a valuable guide to the contents of the papers. Australian librarians, to whom falls the care of archival material, must envy the resources of the Canadian Archives Department, which make such a publication possible, in spite of the Keeper's statement that funds have been sharply reduced since the beginning of the war.

I. LEESON

#### PERIODICAL LITERATURE<sup>1</sup>

*Journal and Proceedings.* Royal Australian Historical Society (8 Young St., Sydney).

Parts 3 and 5 of volume xxviii (1942) contain articles of exceptional interest. Part 3 contains C. Brunson Fletcher's 'Australia and the Pacific, 1788 to 1885,' originally written as a chapter for the Australia volume of the *Cambridge History of the British Empire*, and omitted at the very last moment when the editors were grappling with the difficult problem of overlapping. Mr. Fletcher endeavours to link the early story of New South Wales with the activities of the East India Company and the extension of European influence and rivalries in the Malay Archipelago. 'The East India Company had accepted the Island of Penang from the Sultan of Kedah just before Captain Phillip reached Port Jackson in 1788. This has been well described as "the first new acquisition for the British Empire,

1. See also, p. 94 *supra*.



the first sign of the turn of the tide since the final collapse of the old Empire in 1783.”” He also emphasizes the fact that ‘for a quarter of a century after Phillip’s advent the settlement was little better than an island . . . Port Jackson was essentially a naval extension of the new Empire,’ and that the same was true of Hobart in 1803 and Waitemata in 1840. Even so—these links are with the Indian Ocean rather than with the Pacific and ‘Australia and the South-West Pacific’ would have been a better title, as no attempt is made to survey European rivalries in the mid-Pacific islands or the steady advance of U.S. commercial and consular interests to the shores of Asia and Australia. We still await full investigation of the connections between Sydney on the one hand and San Francisco, Panama and the Cape Horn routes on the other.

Part 5 contains a detailed account of the voyage of the *Duijken* in the Gulf of Carpentaria in 1606, and a brief biography of its skipper, Willem Jansz. (i.e., Janszoon). Mr. T. D. Mutch has marshalled the full resources of the Mitchell Library for the early seventeenth century period of Dutch maritime exploration and much of the information that he gives is made available in English for the first time. Yet P. A. Leupe’s ‘Willem Jansz. van Amsterdam, Admiraal, en Willem Jansz. van Amersfoort, Vice-commandeur der O.I.C.’ was published in *Bijdragen tot Taal-, Land-, en Volkskunde* as early as 1872; other relevant Dutch periodical literature had appeared even earlier and most of the extant Dutch records were in print before the end of the century. For years the Dutch period prior to Tasman was almost a blind spot with the historians of Australian discovery. Only twenty years ago, on the eve of the publication of Professor G. A. Wood’s *Discovery of Australia*, the story was still cluttered and choked with legends and special pleadings based on Portuguese, Spanish and French charts. At a time when misguided enthusiasts were seemingly intent on pushing the date of the first landfall as far back as possible (to at least a century prior to the voyage of the *Duijken*), the references to Jansz.’s voyage were still suspect in many quarters, either as fabrications or as pertaining in reality to voyages along the south coast of New Guinea. Mr. Mutch now reproduces a copy of a chart of the *Duijken*’s voyage, discovered in Vienna in a secret atlas of the Dutch East India Company and published by Dr. F. C. Wieder in *Monumenta Cartographica*, vol. v. (The Hague, 1933). Owing to the scale of reduction imposed by the original, Mr. Mutch accompanies it with a modern map on which the course is clearly marked. (The same procedure was followed in connection with an article on Jansz. which appeared in *The Age*, Melbourne, 11 January 1941.) The authenticity of the Dutch exploration in the Gulf of Carpentaria is now established beyond all doubt; but neither Dr. Wieder nor Mr. Mutch stresses the important fact that the traditional route previously assigned to the *Duijken* must now be reversed. Jansz. sailed direct from New Guinea into the Gulf and the shoals that kept him back from the western entrance of Torres Straits were encountered on the homeward and not on the outward journey. It was, indeed, the former belief that made it possible for Jansz.’s detractors to argue that his discoveries were really made on the south coast of New Guinea; whereas it is now clear that he added nothing whatsoever to the knowledge of that particular coast.

Language barriers partly explain why a full appreciation of the careful, restrained investigations of Dutch scholars has been so long delayed. They likewise explain the omission of Dr. F. W. Stapel’s *De Oost Indische Compagnie en Australasie* (1937) from Mr. Mutch’s list of sources. The only copy of this small, unpretentious volume known to the reviewer is in the Public Library of Western Australia. Yet even Dr. Stapel makes little use of the *Duijken* chart! And this in turn is a reminder of the time-lag that still seems to delay the general



recognition of even the most important research investigations. It is hard to believe, however, that the appearance of Mr. Mutch's timely survey of the Dutch literature will permit of further errors or uncertainties in Australian narratives. It is also possible to hope that future students will be able to examine thoroughly the libraries and archives of Batavia and so make use of East Indian contacts and viewpoints for all stages of Australian history and not merely for the intermittent episodes of coastal exploration.

G. F. JAMES

#### LOCAL HISTORY

*The History of Goulburn, N.S.W.* by Ransome T. Wyatt. Pp. 517, illus. The Municipality of Goulburn, 1941. 10/-.

This is a detailed chronicle, not a history. That is to say, it makes no attempt to interpret the course of events or to place them in their wider setting, but is content to record facts, more or less in chronological order, under a number of headings—exploration and discovery, bushrangers, local government, newspapers, commerce and industry and so on, even down to cemeteries. The author is Registrar of the Diocese of Goulburn and church history naturally figures rather prominently. Much attention is paid to 'firsts'—if you want to know when the first doctor, or midwife, or veterinary surgeon, or locomotive, or laundry, or cinema, or taxi (this last is not mentioned in the index—it is mentioned in the chapter on local government) came to Goulburn, you will find the details here. The book's 517 pages are more crammed with facts than the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and it is consequently quite unreadable.

On the other hand, within its own limits it might well serve as a model. It is the fruit of great industry and enormous patience. Unlike some local historians, the author has gone to great trouble to verify his facts from original sources and, what is more, he gives his references. An impressive range of sources, manuscript records, official and private, newspaper files, books and pamphlets, is laid under contribution and it is hard to imagine that much has been missed. The result is a thoroughly documented and reliable and very detailed chronicle of an important country town and its district, in which every student of the texture of Australian history and, especially, the social, economic and regional historian will find material of interest and a reference book of great value. I do not know of any comparable publication for any Australian city or district, unless perhaps Isaac Selby's *Memorial History of Melbourne*, and even this is undocumented.

The book is sparingly illustrated with rather attractive pen-and-ink sketches by the author, of architectural detail, as well as by photographs and, to crown its virtues, has an excellent index occupying 37 double-column pages of small print.

L. F. FITZHARDINGE



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